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BIDDULPH'S MARCH

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THE

MARCH FROM THE INDUS TO THE HELMUND AND BACK, 1878, 1879.

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR MICHAEL A. BIDDULPH,
K.C.B., R.A., &c., &c.

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION.

1880.

(Authors alone are responsible for their respective memoirs.)

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Wednesday, June 16, 1880.

GENERAL SIR DANIEL LYSONS, K.C.B., Quartermaster-General, in the Chair.

THE MARCH FROM THE INDUS TO THE HELMUND AND BACK, 1878, 1879.

By Major-General SIR MICHAEL A. BIDDULPH, K.C.B., R.A., &c., &c.

The CHAIRMAN: I regret very much to have to inform you that His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge is unable to attend to-day, having some other pressing engagements, from which he could not absent himself. I have now the pleasure of introducing to you Major-General Sir Michael Biddulph. I need hardly say how well qualified he is to deal with the subject he has undertaken, but I should tell you that he has drawn up the paper which he is about to read under some difficulties. He has had very short time to prepare it, and undertook to deliver his lecture at the particular request of the Institution, and has done his best to make it as interesting as possible.

AT the invitation of the Council, I give here a sketch of my experiences of the march of the columns commanded by me to the Helmund and back to the Indus.

I divide the subject into the following parts, observing that the time and space available is so limited that the observations on each must be confined to the shortest descriptions:—

Part 1. The Geographical and Physical Character of the Country—Roads.

Part 2. Baluchistan—Kelat State—Events which led to British occupation of Quetta—Tribes.

Part 3. The March to the Helmund.

Part 4. The Return March to the Indus.

PART 1.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY—ROADS.

The country traversed by columns under my command, or to be mentioned in this study, lies between longitude 72° and 64° East, and latitude 28° and 32° 12′ North.

The parallelogram so enclosed is about 450 miles long by 320 miles wide.

The western frontier of India is for a length of 600 miles bounded by Baluchistan and territories inhabited by Baluch tribes, and for 300 miles Baluch country intervenes between our border and Afghanistan.

The plains of the Punjab and of Sind run along the boundary of Baluchistan, and at a distance of from 50 to 20 miles the River Indus pursues a course as far down as Mithunkot from north to south, and then winds south-west through a country similar to that of Egypt. A

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belt of cultivation and verdure is found along the margin of flood and irrigation, and beyond that, the desert.

If we could in one view behold the aspect looking westward from the right bank of the Indus where its course is north and south, we should see a line of hills called the Eastern Sulimani, extending as a continuous rampart, with the plains running up to the foot of the range. We should note that this line of hills, having an elevation of 11,000 feet at the Takt-i-Suliman and of 7,400 near Fort Munro, opposite Dera-i-Ghazi-Khan, gradually diminishes in height, is broken, and dwindles away till it is lost in the plains near Kusmore, at a point 12 miles from the Indus.

The strip of lowland country on the west bank of the Indus up to the foot of the hills is called the Derajat. It is cut up and broken by torrents, the beds of which are generally dry wastes, and the country is, except at a few places where permanent water is found, altogether sterile and hot.

If in like manner we view the physical aspect looking north and north-west from Jacobabad, we notice a wide bay of plains extending between the broken spur of the Sulimani and a second line of hills, having a direction parallel to the outer range.

This plain, which is called the Kachi, extends in an even surface for 150 miles from the Indus at Sukkur, and is bounded on the north by successive spurs lying between the two great ranges.

The Kachi, thus bounded by barren hills on all sides but the south, is one of the hottest regions in the world. Except where subject to inundations, or within reach of irrigation, it is completely sterile—a hard clay surface called *Pāt*—and this kind of country extends round to the east of the spur of the Suliman into the Derajat country. Subject to terrific heats and to a fiercely hot pestilential wind, the Kachi is at times fatal even to the natives.

The broken projection of the Suliman, in which lie Kahun and Dera, the chief towns of the Maris and Bugtis, partakes of the heat and sterility of the surrounding *pāt*, and water is here scarce. The extremity of the range is intersected by sandy desert nullas. Higher up there are a few valleys, where water renders cultivation possible, and the verdure increases in the parts furthest removed from the hot margin of plains. The broken character of this part of the range gives a step-like configuration; plateaux, divided by ridges, rise one above the other till the high plains and vales of Vatakri, Barkhan, Rakni, Bori, and Zhob are eventually reached.

The range bounding the Kachi to the westward is a continuous wall, with imperceptible breaks only, and it bears the local names of Gindari, Takari, and Kirthar. Through this uniform rampart there are two noteable rents or defiles, viz., the Mulla or Miloh, opening opposite Gandava, leading to Kelat, and the Bolan entering near Dadur, leading to Quetta, Kandahar, and Herat. The Bolan is an abrupt defile—a rent in the range—the bottom is filled with the stony pebbly bed of a mountain torrent. This steep ramp forms for 60 miles the road from Dadur, elevation 750 feet, to the Dasht-i-Bedowlat, elevation 6,225 feet. This inhospitable plateau and the upper portion of the

Bolan are subject to the most piercingly cold winds and temperature, and the sudden change from the heat of the Kachi to the cold above is most trying to the strongest constitutions. The journey in the reverse direction is no less difficult to bear. Notwithstanding, however, the difficulties of the road, the absence of supplies, wood, and grazing, and the hostile character of the predatory tribes around, this route has been always most in favour as the great commercial and military communication from Persia, Central Asia, and Khorassan, to India.

Once the Dasht-i-Bedowlat is reached, no mountain range need be crossed between it and the Khoja Amran. From here plains lead on to plains by wide passages. The Dasht-i-Bedowlat itself is an isolated and singular basin, having no outlet for its drainage. To the north there is an open pass over the skirt of Murdar into the Shallkot Valley, in which Quetta stands. To the eastward a wide kotal leads to Mustung, where an open vale branches out in several directions.

But to understand the configuration of the country between the Eastern Suliman and the Khoja Amran, it will be best to view it in imagination, as we are now able to represent it in our maps, taking standpoints on the Kand Peak, on Surghwund, on Muzwah, Takatu, and Murdar, all of which are prominent elevations of the offshoot of the Safaid Koh, which has been arbitrarily but conveniently designated "the Western Sulimani Range."

The Western Sulimani is the great feature which, with its arms, forms the framework of the whole country from the Indus to within a short distance of Kandahar. Running with a direction south-west,

SKETCH PLAN TO EXHIBIT WATER-PARTING RIDGE CONNECTING EAST SULIMANI TO THE WESTERN SULIMANI. NO SCALE.

it divides the Kakur valleys and plateaux, which radiate from its eastern slopes from the group of vales which go to form the Shallkot and Pishin plains. A water-parting ridge stretches eastward from the neighbourhood of the Kand Peak, and is produced towards the Eastern Sulimani, which with this ridge causes this spur to assume the form of a ⊣, as shown on previous page.

The Western Sulimani, after bounding Pishin and Shallkot on their eastern border, runs in a southerly direction, supporting Kelat, and it eventually is lost in the sea at Cape Monze. Continuing our study in a more detailed manner, we observe that the Eastern Shall Valley, which opens from the Dasht-i-Bedowlat, has a direction due north from the water-parting of Sir-i-ab, and spreads into a wide plain, in the midst of which Quetta stands, well removed from the mountains. Between Murdar and Takatu, we note that there are two passes leading beyond the screen of mountains into a country which was in 1878 a *terra incognita*. Of these the Hunna pass rises to a water-parting of the Nari or Sibi drainage, and the Surkhwulla pass to a water-parting of the Kakur Lora.

The Shall Valley we note curls round the promontory of Takatu, and at a little beyond Kujlack meets the valley of the Kakur Lora. The vale of the Kakur Lora again opens into the Kanozai-Balozai plateau, which has its origin at the open Kotal of Mehterzai, right under the Kand Peak. By this configuration it arises that there is a fair open way of plains extending along the western face of the Western Sulimani for 70 miles, from the top of the Bolan to the entrance into Zhob.

At Gwal, 30 miles from Quetta, there is a rift in the screen of hills called Suggurband, out of which the Kakur Lora rivulet flows. Through the gap an easy way is found to the low open pass of Ushmugzai, where water drains towards Sibi and back to Pishin. From Sibi to this point I believe a suitable line may be found for the railway from Sukkur to Kandahar now in progress and completed as far as Sibi. The railway should gain the Pishin plateau at Gwal, finding its exit from the hills through the Suggurband defile.

Ten miles north-east of Gwal, and opposite Kanozai, we find an opening in the hills leading due east to the Ushtirra Sirra Pass, elevation 8,277 feet. This point, which is 16 miles in a straight line from Kanozai, lies between the rugged mountains, Surghwund and Muzwah, which are seated on the crest of the ridge. At this place is the water-parting of waters flowing to Pishin by the Togai stream, and to Sibi by the Lehrgut. The route to the pass follows the Togai nulla, which presents no physical difficulties to the construction of a road or railway.

The pass itself lies over an upland of hillocks of clay and other soft formations.

Ten miles east of the Ushtirra Sirra a new water-parting is found, called Momungai Isurrai: elevation 8,451 feet.

Here the drainage is to the Lehrgut westwards, and then south to Sibi, and on to the great Bori Valley eastwards.

South of the Momungai rises the rocky ridge of Spinskar, which is a prolongation of Muzwah. To the south of Spinskar there is a water-parting (which we did not visit) where waters flow to Sibi by the Lehrgut stream, and westwards by the Pai Valley to Smallan and Tal.

The country between the Ushtirra Sirra and Momungai lying under the rugged mountains around is highly picturesque. The slopes and lower hills are clothed with cypress and other shrubs. Though now uninhabited, we fancied that here the troops and officials might some day find a cool retreat from the bare, sun-heated, plains of Khorassan.

From the Momungai Pass the country opens, and at Chinjan, 15 miles down the valley, the wide plains of Bori are spread out. Here and in the neighbourhood we find a few isolated villages and cultivation, and there is a meeting of plains and of roads. Three miles to the east of Chinjan, surrounded by plains, there rises the remarkable natural fortress of Siazgai. This almost inaccessible hill was formerly used by the Moguls as a stronghold, and it seemed to me that it might again serve such a purpose. The eastern boundary of Khorassan is somewhere a little to the east of the Momungai Pass.

For 80 miles in a direction slightly south of east, the Bori Valley offers a fair highway of plains, and its lower end is studded with villages. Here there is much cultivation and a sufficient amount of wood, forage, and grazing, to meet the requirements of troops.

At Shoran, about 60 miles east of Chinjan, we find another meeting of plains and roads. The drainage of western Bori here inclines to the south, and a valley opens stretching a little north of east towards Kirwuddy and a plateau called Sahara. Open gaps in the dividing ridge lead towards Zhob. Sahara is an upland formation, where there is a drainage in all directions, and from the description given by the natives, we believed it to be a connecting link between the West and East Sulimanis.

Near Biani, 24 miles from Chinjan, in a direction south by south-east, there is a pass connecting the Bori Valley with that of Pai and Smallan, which leads on to Tal and Chotiali by successive plains. These here and there are hemmed in by the hills, and do not present the broad open character of the Bori Valley. Eastward of the pass, the ridge dividing Bori from the Smallan-Tal Valley is a more abrupt and continuous feature, and the passes over it are only fit for footmen.

Ten miles east of Shoran, the streams which drain West and East Bori unite, and the combined river escapes through the ridge by the Annumbar gap, and pursues a south-west course towards the Kachi. A few miles south of the gap the country opens out, and here is found the chief town of the Luni Pathans. At about 30 miles from the gap, the Annumbar receives the Pai-Tal-Chotiali stream.

From the Luni country eastward, the character of the country changes. The valleys no longer have a direction east and west. Three ridges run from north-east to south-west, containing the Chimalung and the Bala-Dakka Valleys, which seem to have their origin in the

Sahara plateau. The streams draining these valleys flow towards the Annumbar.

Of these ridges the third, the Jandran Range, is the most formidable feature, but it seemed to us possible to lay out a line of road, or even a railway through this country, which would have no very severe gradient.

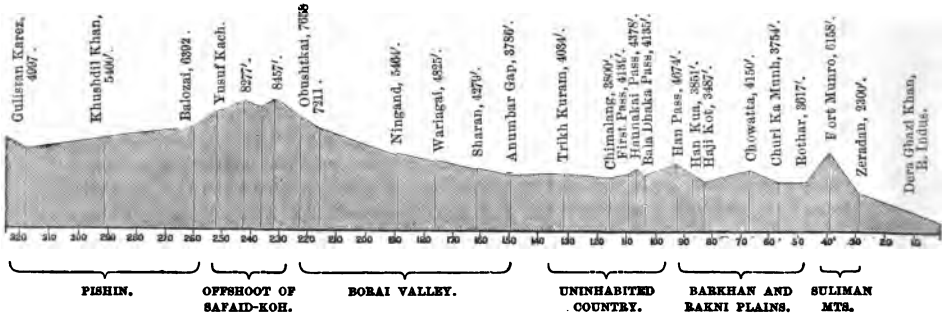
The Hun Pass leads over the Jandran Range, and the road gains the Barkhan Plain by the Hundurah at Hasni Kot. The Barkhan Plain is continuous to the Vatakri Plain, and from here there is a road with an easy gradient down to the Derajat through the Chachar pass.

To the north-east, Barkhan opens on the Kitran Plain, which is connected by open valleys with the Rakni Plain. Rakni is a long strip of inclined vale, running along the west flank of the Eastern Sulimani, extending, it is believed, to the Sahara plateau.

From Rothar, the Rakni village at the foot of the Sulimani, on the west side there is a road up to Fort Munro, the summer settlement of the Dera-Ghazi-Khan officials, from whence a steep path leads down to Zeradan, the first stage in the Derajat.

The section here given will enable the student to understand the gradients of the passes and the position and elevation of the valleys up to the Khoja Amran.

SECTION OF ROUTE FROM THE INDUS TO THE PLAINS OF PISHIN.



Levels, in Feet; Distances, in Miles.

Returning to the Pishin border, we find the Kanozai-Balozai plateau runs up to the north-east, to an open saucer-shaped pass at Mehterzai—elevation 7,139—which leads into the Zhob Valley. This extensive country is described to us as a wide plain not less important than Pishin and longer than Bori. Zhob touches the Gomal, and therefore finds an outlet to the Derajat by the Ghwaleri Pass.

The Balozai Plain drained by the Surkhab is produced in a direction south-west, and joins the Pishin Valley beneath the Shergundai Peak. There is thus a continuous circuit of plains and vales winding

all round the eastern border and into the central Pishin Plain. This feature has a great military and political importance.

The Shergundai Peak is the extremity of a spur of the Kand Mountain, and there is a short cut by the Surai Pass from Balozai to Kushdil Khan Ka Killa over the ridge dividing the Balozai from the Barshor Valleys.

So far the country described—from Kujlak along the east border of Pishin, and down to the Eastern Sulimani, and round to the confines of Zhob, and on to Kushdil Khan Ka Killa—is new ground, which has never before been visited by Europeans.

From the Surai Pass we got a wonderful view over the Pishin plains, which, with views from other heights, enabled us to understand the country early in the course of our operations.

A comprehensive study of the Pishin country shows that it is on its north-western side supported on a limb of the Western Sulimani. This spur, which defines the west of the Barshor Valley, is spread out into the broad plateau of Toba, and is then produced as a continuous ridge dividing Pishin from the plains of Kadani, under the name of Khoja Amran.

The Barshor Valley is a deep bay of the plain, and there is an open valley within the outer screen of hills, which was not visited by us.

A road strikes off here to the Ghilzai country and to Ghazni. Kushdil Khan Ka Killa has been placed in the bay of the plains in a position commanding the roads which concentrate there. An important communication is one from the Kojak along the Daman or mountain skirt by which the deep nullas of the Loras, and other obstructions can be avoided.

Though intersected by some very low and unimportant hills and ridges, and thus separated into compartments, the Pishin plains and those of Shallkot may be looked upon as one feature. We may imagine the Shall Valley being as it were the vestibule, the Kujlak-Kakur Vale the passage, the Sayud Yaru Plain, an ante chamber, and Pishin proper the great *salle*.

Surrounded by mountains which give forth an abundant supply of water, the lands bordering on the hills are studded with villages, and there is much cultivation, and a capacity for a great deal more prosperity than has hitherto been possible under an insecure Government. There is a total absence of timber, and the cultivation of fruit trees seems to have been neglected.

The Lora rivers cutting deep into the plain offer considerable obstacles to the construction of roads in some directions, but owing to the happy disposition of the plains, it is possible in great part to avoid them.

The Khoja Amran is a ridge of uniform character, having a long slope on its eastern side, and a steep scarp towards the west. It is a complete rampart overlooking Kadani and the plains stretching towards Kandahar, over which, from its summit, there is a most singular view.

The plains, several thousand feet below, are laid out like a sea, and the mountains run out into isolated promontories—to the left the desert is seen having the appearance of a turbulent tide about to over-

flow the tranquil plains at our feet. Far away in the midst of the desert, mountain tops appear already enveloped by the sandy waste.

This great feature which has such an influence on the country of Khorassan, stretches for a distance of 300 miles in a north-west direction from Shorawak, at the end of the Khoja Amran, to Lash-Jowain in Seistan.

Rajistan, as it is called by the natives, is composed in great part of loose sand, which is in movement under the influence of the prevailing south-west wind. The tilt of the country is from the Hindu Kush towards the desert, and the rivers and streams all have a course north-east to south-west. The sand has, however, from all time been in antagonism to the waters, absorbing the streams or turning them by its embankment out of their natural course. The result is that the rivers, hindered in pursuing their original direction, are diverted to the north and westward, and flow towards the lower country, seeking an outlet. Hence stream is collected to stream, and river to river, and the combined waters flow round the desert edge till they reach the Helmund, which towards the end of its course is also diverted from its proper direction, and eventually lost in the swamps of Seistan.

From the Khoja Amran on to Kandahar the country is disposed as follows:—On the left there is the desert stretching with a line of bluffs at first due north and then trending to the westward. On the right the offshoots of the main ranges enclose a succession of valleys, the promontories being broken into isolated masses with passages between them along the margin of the desert.

The principal valleys are the Kadani, the Mêl, the Takhtipul, the Arghessan, and the Turnak.

The Kadani is a vast plain divided from the Mêl by a group of hills through which there are, opposite the Ghwaja, the Hauz, and in front of the Khojak, the Ghuzgai passes. The Mel communicates with the Takhtipul Valley by the Kirkanai and Ghlo Kotals, and there is the Burghanai leading direct to the Arghessan Valley.

At Takhtipul, the Khojak and the Ghwaja roads unite.

From the Takhtipul Valley to the Arghessan there are wide gaps offering no obstruction. The lower portion of the Arghessan and Turnak Valleys is one wide expanse of plain, and a ridge divides it from the Kandahar plain.

The rivers so far do not present much impediment to the passage of troops in dry weather, but in flood they become most serious obstacles and cannot be passed till the waters retire. Altogether we find the country between the Kadani and the Kandahar plains affords successive positions suitable for defence.

The plain of Kandahar may be entered from that of the Turnak by several gaps, and those on the chief roads are capable of being strongly defended; the watercourses on the right bank of the river would add much to the difficulty of attack from the eastward. Though only a side portion of the Turnak Valley, the Kandahar plain bounded on the east by a ridge, and divided from the Argandab Valley by a mountain range, has all the appearance of a distinct valley. Kandahar stands on the western side of the plain which was originally a barren skirt of

the mountain. Exactly opposite the city, and two miles to the westward, there is a wide break in the dividing range through which the road to Herat leads, and by which are conducted the many canals and watercourses taken from the Argandab to supply the town and fertilize its environs. The energy and skill displayed in these extensive waterworks cannot be too high extolled. Brought from a point many miles distant in the Argandab Valley, the chief canal with its offshoots conducts a vast body of water, which is dispersed along the contours of the declining plain in innumerable channels, spreading a rich fertility for many miles in a fan-like form to the south-east of the gap. Villages cluster around the city on three sides. Cornfields, orchards, gardens, and vineyards are seen in luxurious succession, presenting a veritable oasis within the girdle of rugged hills and desert wastes all round. And if we turn to the aspect of the country beyond the gap we see in the Argandab Valley along the canals and the river banks a fair and beautiful landscape of village and cultivated ground, stretching for many miles in each direction. If we could cast our eyes still further, we should see in the vales of the Turnak and Arghessan districts scarcely less fertile.

This productive character of the immediate neighbourhood of Kandahar, and its commanding position within reach of other fertile districts would give to this place under a strong, stable, and just Government, as much prosperity and happiness as falls to the lot of any place in the world.

Kandahar having to the south the boundary of an impassable desert and on the north the terminal spurs of the offshoots of the great range, it follows that the main communications with the outside world lie along the strip of country between the desert and the mountains, westward with Herat and to the south-eastward with India. A third road to the interior of the country leads up the Turnak Valley to Ghazni. Beyond these three roads there are no others fit for the march of armies or for trade communications.

The position of Kandahar near to the slopes of the range to the westward of the city renders it impossible to construct works close at hand, to cover the road from Herat. The high ridge and outlying hills dividing Kandahar and its suburbs from the Argandab Valley completely command all the level ground between the city and the pass. Beyond the gap a group of detached mountains extends overlooking the approaches, and follows the left bank of the Argandab, as far down as Panjwai, 15 miles distant. Positions for defensive works must be sought, therefore, in front of that place, on the right bank of the river.

To the north-east of Kandahar the open plain affords situations for forts well removed from the hills at a short distance from the town, and at Akhund Ziarut, 30 miles on the road to Ghazni, there is a gorge, which would, if held, add to the security on that quarter.

The country between Kandahar and the Helmund has the same general characteristics: there is a strip of plains and skirts of the mountains, bounded on the south by the desert, and on the north by successive spurs of the main range.

The River Dori flows along the meeting of the plain and the desert, and joins the Argandab at a point opposite Atta Karez, about 32 miles distant from Kandahar. The Argandab coasts along the desert, and for some distance inclines to the north, and eventually at Balakhana the river gains a mastery over the desert, and turning south-west, flows in the direction of the tilt of the country to join the Helmund a little below the ancient city of Kala Bist or Bost.

The fall of the whole of the Khorassan plateau to the westward is shown by the following elevations—Pishin 5,000 feet—Kandahar 3,500 feet—and Kala Bist 2,500 feet.

At Sinjuri, about 11 miles west of Kandahar on the right bank of the Argandab, there commences a system of mountain skirts, for the most part sterile, which extend in a great curve round the ends of the promontories of the hills to the left bank of the Helmund. This wide stretch of country is, for certain seasons, a grazing ground; but except where fertilized with karezes, in some good positions, it is unfit for cultivation. To the left of this sterile plain lies the fertile tract along the banks of the Argandab, presenting a strange and charming contrast to the waste around.

The limb which forms the western limit of the Argandab Valley is here seen bounding the great plain on the right hand, and forming an impassable barrier. From Sinjuri there are, however, paths leading into the next valley of Khakrez passable for footmen and lightly-laden camels.

This rugged barrier opposite Atta Karez approaches the desert to within about 10 miles, so that the traversible open plain is reduced to that narrow limit. On the whole road from Herat to Kandahar this is the narrowest gateway, and this remarkable feature, and the concentration of roads here, gives to Atta Karez a strategic importance unequalled by any other spot between India and Central Asia.

The roads which meet at Atta Karez are as follows:—The great Herat highway passes through Kokeran, and crosses the Argandab opposite Sinjuri, from whence it lies along the open plain all the way to Atta Karez; second, the road which crosses the Argandab at Panjwai, and afterwards traverses the many watercourses on the left bank of the river; third, the road from Taktipul towards Herat, which follows the edge of the desert, and leaves Kandahar to the north.

The roads which strike off to the westward towards Herat are:—The one along the skirt of the mountains through Kishki Nakhud direct to Girishk, and a more circuitous one to Bala Khana. From Bala Khana a road branches off to Kala Bist by the Doab, and another strikes over the waste to Abbaza, a village opposite the ford and ferry, to Girishk.

Kishki Nakhud is situated at the foot of the range before mentioned. The abundance of water here supplied by karezes and watercourses creates an oasis in the sterile waste, and the cultivation follows the course of the water down a depression in the plain towards Kala Saidal, there being a line of villages in that direction. Kala Saidal is equidistant from the end of the hill with Atta Karez, and thus the three villages form a triangle, and support one another. The import-

DERA ISMAIL KHAN
River Indus
Dag Lora R.
Nigand
Kand Peak
Mangrota
31°

ance which was formerly attached to these points is attested by the remains of forts, some of which are of extreme antiquity. At Sung Hissar there are the ruins of a very important work on an isolated hill.

I have examined the ground in front of Atta Karez, and discovered a site for a work which would command the valley of the Argandab, and sweep the elevated open plain towards the west and north-west, and Lung Hissar might again be used as a fortified post of support.

To the westward of this trilateral the open country expands in a triangular form, of which the north side is bounded by the line of hills, the south by the Argandab and the desert, and the base by the Helmund. In a direct line to Abbaza from Atta Karez the distance is about 46 miles, and the open country along the left bank of the Helmund from the mountains down to the junction of this river with the Argandab is about 75 miles in extent.

The whole of this tract of country is an undulating and at the same time inclined plain sloping from the hills.

Opposite Girishk, the plateau is elevated 175 feet above the river, while, at the same time, it gradually slopes away towards Bost in gentle undulations.

Throughout the whole distance, from some miles above Abbaza, down to the ancient city, the left bank maintains a decided command over the river and the alluvial tract on its right bank, and affords positions for defence and observation of its passages.

To the westward beyond the Helmund a vast expanse of sterile and slightly undulating plain extends, bounded on the north by the hills, and without limits to the south and west.

A road *viâ* Washir strikes off from Girishk partly through the hills towards Herat, which is said to be the best supplied with water and is cooler, and passes through a more cultivated country than the road to the south of it. This latter road, leading west by north, is directed on Farrah; it has less physical difficulties, but is not so well supplied with water, fodder, or cultivation. It is, however, quite passable with proper precautions and arrangements.

To the north, roads lead to Zamindawar, and terminate in the mountains.

In the great arc from west by north to the course of the Helmund no intermediate passable track exists. The road by Bost, Rudbar, and Lash, along the course of the river, passes through tracts more or less cultivated, and productive of fodder and grazing. This road has been frequently used by armies in their march to and from Kandahar. Besides the three roads above mentioned there are no others between the Helmund and Herat.

The River Helmund being about 4 feet deep at the fords, and from 90 to 120 yards wide, and having several separate channels, presents a considerable obstacle to the passage of an army; the river is subject to floods, when it would be quite impassable without a bridge. It follows, therefore, that any army intending to pass the Helmund must be provided with bridge material. Although the fords in the dry season are numerous, the principal passage for the two northern

roads is at Girishk. The castle of that name stands at a point where the road leaves the valley to gain the plain described as stretching to the westward.

The position at Abbaza, which is very strong, is best illustrated by a plan and sketches. The configuration of the country from the hills down the course of the Helmund is that of a seam of verdure and cultivation set within two boundaries of sterile plains. There are no mountains, as indicated in the maps, in the neighbourhood of Girishk.

This alluvial tract is diversified with woods, grass lands, and cultivation. Villages are grouped in the wider positions of the valley, and there is an elaborate system of irrigation canals. In all Khorassan there is not a more productive country, and nowhere is there so much grass and wood to be found. In the great bend of the Helmund, where it coasts along the desert, the valley is equally productive. The cultivated lands lie alternately on either bank. Sterile wastes and sandy deserts bound the streak of verdure on both sides.

In the Argandab and Helmund Doab a considerable amount of cultivation exists on the right bank and in the angle above the junction of the rivers; the waters of both the Helmund and the Argandab are led, for the irrigation of the low-lying sands, through extensive channels.

At the extremity of the angular plateau, on the right of the Doab and on the left bank of the Helmund, stands the remains of the ancient city of Bost. At the very south extremity of the high bank the citadel commands the ford over the Helmund.

The ruins of the city are in a wonderful state of preservation, palaces with extensive courtyards are found along the margin of the river, to which stairs descended from the several residences.

The citadel itself seems to have been built on the *débris* of very ancient fortifications and buildings, and rises to a height of some 150 feet above the bed of the river. The base of the fortifications is washed by a channel only, the main body of the river flows some little distance off. The outer fortifications consist of a rampart and ditch traced in the form of a rectangle, the citadel being placed at the south end, and cut off by an internal ditch and rampart.

The position of Bost is a most important one, as it commands the entrance from the Gurmsir and valley of the Helmund into the Doab on the road to Kandahar.

The junction of the two rivers takes place about 3 miles below the citadel, and we find on the desert cliff at that point the remains of a watch tower.

It is to be noted that at Kishki Nakhud, Kila Saidal, all along the course of the Helmund, and here at Bost, remains of fortifications and buildings seem to attest the high estimation in which all these strategic points were held. Throughout all this part of Khorassan ruins mark every point of interest; whether this importance was due to the fertility of the neighbouring lands or to the spot being of military importance.[1]

[1] A note by Colonel Yule, in the Appendix, gives all that is known of the ancient city of Bost, which seems to have been visited by few travellers.

Part 2.

Baluchistan—Kelat State—Events which led to British Occupation of Quetta—Tribes.

The country of Baluchistan may be said to be inhabited by Baluchis, but when we come to examine the several tribes which people this wide and irregular country, we find that though claiming the distinctive appellation of "Baluch," the tribes do not own a common cradle, and have not the characteristics of one family. The origin, character, and customs, however, of the Baluchis distinguish them in a marked way from their neighbours the Afghans.

In Baluchistan there are said to be three great classes, the Brahuis, the Lumris, and the Rhinds. Of these the Brahuis, inhabiting the plateau of Kelat and the neighbourhood, and the Rhinds of the eastern border of Baluchistan, are those with whom we have had most to do in the recent operations.

The Brahuis give Khans to Kelat; they are a migratory race, warlike, entirely engaged in raiding, as all Baluchi tribes are. The Rhinds are composed of a number of tribes, having Tumundars, or chiefs, who are hereditary. Some of these tribes, such as the Ketrans[1] and Bozdars, occupying the north-east corner of the country, are independent. The Maris and Bugtis inhabiting the hills along the projecting promontory of the Suliman, are quasi-independent, paying no tribute to the Khan of Kelat, but acknowledging him as head of the Baluch confederacy.

A few of those Tumundars who have their tribes partly in British territory, and partly in the Baluch country, are our subjects. The tribes so situated are the Mazaris, the Gurchanis, the Legaris, Lunds, and Kosahs. Of all the Rhind tribes, the Maris are the most powerful. As the authority of the Khan of Kelat became weak, the Maris exhibited their independence, made war on the Khan, or committed raids in defiance of his authority, and in 1874 Guzzun Khan, the Mari Tumundar, was openly termed "the Nawab of the Hills." The Bugtis, whose country lies to the south of that of the Maris, is the next most independent tribe. Less powerful than the Maris, they have however, been their rivals, and often successfully held their own in their internal periodical wars.

The country inhabited by the Maris and Bugtis, and some other tribes, does not favour the pursuits of cultivation or of a settled life, on the contrary, the want of lands suitable for agriculture obliges the Baluch to raid, and in such a life he glories. To be prominent and successful in the "Chappao" is the Baluchi's whole aim. As a rule they are mounted, and invariably ride mares having great powers of endurance. The Baluch is no fanatic. He leaves the duty of prayer and sacred observances to his Tumundar, who undertakes the office, without becoming in any way over-righteous, but as a part of the

[1] The Ketrans are said to be a Pathan tribe. They have all the manners and dress of Baluchis.

duty of his position. He is gay and fond of sport, and has principles of honour in a marked degree.

The early history of Baluchistan is enveloped in mystery, and is of a very fragmentary character. We know that for many centuries Kelat was governed by a Hindoo dynasty, and the last Rajah was named Sewah, or this was the hereditary title. Previous to the Hindoo Raj, a Mahomedan family was in power. The Sewah, having towards the end of the 17th century, been obliged to invite aid to repress the encroachments of a Rhind tribe, Kambar, a chief of a sub-tribe of the Brahuis, came to his assistance, and eventually assuming the chief power, Kambar reigned at Kelat.

On the accession of Kambar to power, the tribes having decided that his rule should be hereditary, a constitution, suited to the tribal nature of the people, was formed. The country was divided into two provinces, Sarawan and Jhallawan, in which two sirdars were placed in chief authority over minor chiefs and their tribes. Hereditary succession for these sirdarships was made the principle.

It was ordained that they should sit on the right and left of the Khan in durbar, as counsellors. Besides these functionaries, the Khan was assisted by a special adviser, or Wazir, also hereditary, who was selected from the Tagik population; by this means the class from which the revenue was principally obtained was conciliated.

In these days the resources of the Khan were scanty, and the state was altogether insignificant. In 1839 the invasion of India by Nadir Shah, afforded to Mohbut Khan, the ruler of Kelat, the opportunity of rendering great services to the Persian monarch, and in recognition of these, the province of Kach-Gandava was ceded to him. In the reign of Ahmad Shah, Nadir's successor, in consequence of the tyrannical conduct of Mohbut, Nasir, his brother, having expostulated with him without effect, is said to have assassinated him, and, with the consent of the Shah, Nasir Khan assumed the reins of government. Aiming at the consolidation of the confederacy, Nasir divided the lands and revenue of Kach-Gandava into four equal portions, assigning two shares to the tribes of Sarawan and Jhallawan, and the other two, one to the Jat population of the country, and the other to benefit his own revenue. A part occupied by the Rhinds and Maghzis was not interfered with, as these tribes had received special grants, which placed them on a more independent footing in the time of Nadir Shah. At the same time it appears that the Rhinds entered into the political system of the Brahuis, by being attached to Sarawan.

The measures thus taken established a sagacious political economy, which was popular with the tribal chiefs, and enlisted them in the cause of maintaining the integrity of the confederation and the supremacy of the Khan over newly acquired districts.

Aided by the contingents of the chiefs, Nasir Khan I added to his dominions by conquest, and Ahmad Shah made over to him the Shall and Mustung Valleys. Although the Khan's relationship with his suzerain was not unruffled, he was able to render conspicuous services afterwards, and as a reward the Shah granted him the Harrand and Dajil districts on the Derajat, to hold in perpetuity.

Nasir Khan reigned 40 years, and died in 1795. Combining all the high qualities of an able administrator, and enlisting the hearty co-operation of his feudal chiefs, he left the Khanate of Baluchistan, extending from the Arabian Sea to the Indus at Dera-Ghazi-Khan, and a name which is still proverbial amongst all classes of the population for equity, liberality, and wisdom.

No succeeding ruler of Kelat has ever equalled Nasir I in power of administration, or in the wide sway exercised by him. Gradually, through the weakness of character of the Khans, through intrigue, and the rebellion of distant districts, the curtailment of territory was brought about, and the power of the Khans over the tribes has been loosened.

Passing over intermediate history we find that in 1830 Harrand and Dajil were sequestered from Baluch territory, and annexed by Runjit Sing to the Punjab.

In 1838, the Indian Government having resolved to restore Shah Sujah to the Afghan throne, intercourse between the British and the Khan of Kelat took place early in that year as a preparatory measure to the passage of the troops through his dominions.

The march of the columns through the Kachi and the Bolan to Quetta was attended with constant harassing by the warlike tribes on all sides of the routes and passes. The most daring raids and attacks were made on detached parties and on the baggage trains, causing loss of life and general obstruction. Mehrab Khan, the ruler of Kelat, who was badly advised by an intriguing minister, Mulla Mahomed Hussain, had little control over the Bolan, or failed to exercise it; the authorities had, however, the belief that he was the instigator of the lawless attacks upon our communications by his own subjects. Mehrab Khan was accused also of the design of starving out the army, by withholding stores of grain and interfering with the natural supply of the country to Quetta.

So straightened were the troops that they were placed on half rations, and the cavalry suffered severely, and at one time it was a question whether the army had not better give up the expedition and retire. In addition to these hostile acts the Khan, through arrogance or suspicion, declined the invitation to pay his respects to the Shah as required by etiquette. In all these failings the Khan was found to be treacherous and hostile to the British Government, and it was determined, in order to establish security in this quarter, to exact retribution.

In November, 1839, a force under the command of General Willshire was sent to depose the Khan, and the British force gallantly took Kelat, which was defended with much obstinacy. Mehrab died sword in hand, surrounded by his chiefs, many of whom perished with him.

In their first attempts at restoring the Khanship, the British authorities were far from fortunate. By selecting the son of Mohbut and ignoring the claims of Mir Nasir, the son of Mehrab, an error was committed, and the transfer of Mustung and Shall to Shah Sujah helped to create rebellion, which shortly broke out into open warfare. Certain disaffected sirdars supported the cause of Mir Nasir; Kelat was

attacked, and treachery within the walls aided the rebels, and the supreme Baluch authorities, the sirdars of Sarawan and Jhallawan elected Mir Nasir to be the new Khan. In the end Mir Nasir tendered his submission to the British authority. The Government installed him formally, and a treaty was concluded dated October the 6th, 1841.

A short time after this settlement, the reverses of the British in Afghanistan obliged the Government to again make a military movement by the Bolan and Quetta into Afghanistan, and Mir Nasir II kept his engagements and assisted in the operations to the best of his ability. In 1843, the province of Sind was conquered and annexed. This acquisition brought our possessions into contact with those of the Khan. At the close of the war, the troops having been removed, the tribes found an opportunity to follow their habitual inclinations, and raids and inroads took place. Mulla Mahomed Hussain, the evil adviser of Mehrab and chief cause of his downfall, was in favour at Kelat, and was engaged in his old game of evil advice and intrigue.

In 1847, a new administration was created on the Sind frontier, with the view of repressing the aggressive acts of the Baluch tribes, and introducing order along our border. To this new organization, Major Jacob, a very talented and energetic soldier, was appointed with the title of "Political Superintendent and Commander of the "Upper Sind Frontier." Major Jacob took up his quarters at Khanpur, at that time a miserable village on the edge of the desert, 50 miles from Sukkur. For a number of years this Officer pursued a line of vigorous action, punishing the raids of the tribes by attack in the plain with his cavalry detachments, which were posted along the border and ever on the alert. General Jacob originated measures which resulted under a succession of able Officers in introducing peace, order, and respect for the British name where hitherto there had been rapine, murder, and a state of constant alarm.

Soon after Jacob took up office, Mahomed Hussain visited him and impressed him favourably. At a second visit this wily intriguer proposed that he himself should seize the chief power at Kelat and succeed to the Khanship. The exposure of this plot, which Mir Nasir could scarcely credit, and the consequent destruction of the influence of the traitorous minister, brought about a good understanding between the British Government and the Khan, and led to the contract of a second Treaty, which was effected in May, 1854. The provisions of this Treaty were that Mir Nasir II bound himself to oppose the enemies of the British, to act subordinate to the Government, and to enter into no negociations with other States without consent.

If it should be necessary to station troops in the country of Kelat they should occupy the positions considered advisable.

The Khan should prevent plundering and outrage within or near British territory, and protect merchants, making no exactions beyond the levy of an equitable duty to be fixed by Government.

On the faithful performance of these several engagements the Khan was to receive an annual subsidy of Rs. 50,000, which grant was to be withheld if the conditions were not acted up to.

This Treaty, ratified in the presence of and with the consent of the chiefs of the confederation, remained unfulfilled. The Khan neglected to enforce order, and the Government took no decisive action to oblige him to do so, and the application of the subsidy to the Khan's own purposes, and to the support of a mercenary force, was regarded as a menace by the chiefs, and occasioned a pecuniary loss, while at the same time they were thwarted in making their own terms with the caravans.

As regards the stipulation for the prevention of plundering caravans, this remained a dead letter, and the Bolan was closed and all traffic at an end.

In 1857, Mir Nasir died suddenly, and it is said he was poisoned by Gul Mahomed, an Officer of his court, who hated the English, and hoped to find a more pliable character in the Khan's younger brother, Khuddadad, the next heir.

The death of Nasir II, at the early age of 31, proved to be a calamity. In spite of his failings, no prince, since the days of Nasir the Great, had exhibited so much judgment and capacity to govern, and latterly he had shown a disposition to be guided by the counsels of the British authorities.

Mir Khuddadad Khan succeeded to the Khanate without obstruction, but there were opposing factions at work, who by intrigue and at length by open rebellion, tried to gain their own selfish ends. Kuddadad was but a youth, and being surrounded by an intriguing court and evil-disposed sirdars, opportunity was afforded to the chiefs of making insolent and inordinate demands.

We have seen how in 1847 an administration was originated on the Sind frontier, to conduct our relations with Baluchistan in view to replacing chronic disorder by peace and a gradual spread of security. With the conquest of the Punjab the British Government assumed on that frontier the position which hitherto had been held by Runjit Sing as paramount Sovereign. The Punjab touched Baluch territory for a length of 200 miles.

It hence followed that it came to be the business of the Lieutenant-Governors of the Punjab, assisted by Derajat Officers, to carry on our relations with the semi-independent tribes—the Maris, Bugtis, and others—who at times contumaciously assumed independence, but nevertheless were integral parts of the Baluch Confederacy.

The reign of Kuddadad Khan, the present ruler of the Khanate, has been marked by anarchy and civil war with scarce any intermission, culminating in a state of affairs which in 1874—1875, became intolerable. As it has been shown, the connection between the tribes within and without the border is very intimate. Hence disturbance within gave rise to vibrations felt throughout our whole border. Trade routes were closed, the Treaty stipulations were set at nought, and the Khan himself was in danger of losing his throne and even his life. In fine, the country was open to foreign intrigue and aggression.

To avert an impending crisis Major Sandeman, who had obtained an influence over the tribes, was deputed to the Mari and Brahui Chiefs, and was well received by them, and subsequently by the Khan himself.

Both the parties of the conflict were weary and exhausted by the struggle. The British Officer was welcomed by Khan and sirdars alike. In spite of a spirit of lawless insubordination, there was a principle of loyalty to the Khan, and above all, on both sides, the instinct of subordination to the paramount power was inherent. These principles have been the main stay of our politic success on this frontier.

Although this mission was not completely successful, it was productive of a new order of things and opened the door to more satisfactory mediations which formed the next step in the history of Kelat.

It was now determined that Major Sandeman should again (1876) visit the Court of the Khan, invested with higher powers and an authority supported by a military force.

At the time when the Envoy and escort entered Kelat a number of caravans were expecting the re-opening of the great trade route, and advantage was taken to let them pass through the dangerous region under protection of the British force.

Although the Chiefs generally gave their allegiance, the breach between them and the Khan was so wide that many declared that peace would not be assured unless the Khan was deposed and a new ruler was installed protected by our troops, and some were advocates of the British Government assuming the sovereignty over Kelat for good.

However, by the tact and judgment of the Envoy, decisions between the rival parties were arrived at. The Khan and the sirdars met each other half way in a fairly amicable spirit, and terms of reconciliation were drawn up and read out in durbar.

The agreement made was in these terms:—"We do heartily agree "to aid, to the best of our power, in keeping open the trade routes, to "preserve the peace of the country, and we swear we will do nothing "to violate this our written agreement of peace."

During the sojourn of the mission in the country Kelat enjoyed a repose and a commercial and agricultural prosperity such as never had been before known. Trade was resumed, villages were rebuilt, and land that was lying fallow was brought under cultivation.

The succeeding step in the proceedings was the execution of a Treaty, based on the stipulations of former engagements, amplified to complete relations between the two Governments in a manner calculated to promote the interests of both; and as the troops of the British Government were already at Kelat, where their presence was heartily welcomed, it was wisely decided not to withdraw them.

The final arrangement was the constitution of an agency over which Major Sandeman should preside and the location of the troops and Agent at Quetta. It was rightly judged that to influence the Khan and the tribes we must be in contact with them. Thus a most important part of our frontier has been converted from a scene of disorder into a fairly peaceable country, and a base of operations was afforded which saved infinite hardship and even loss and bloodshed in the operations which became necessary in 1878.

Part 3.

The March to the Helmund.

As, in this lecture it will be impossible to give details of the whole march, the plan pursued will be, to represent events up to certain marked points in a cursory manner, and to take a view of some of the leading situations, commencing with Mooltan, the point of departure.

Mooltan.

Towards the end of September, 1878, the intercourse between the British Government and the Amir of Cabul became so strained that the probability of an early recourse to arms was foreseen, and a concentration of troops was made towards three points on the frontier, viz., to Peshawur, the Kurrum, and to Quetta. It fell to my lot to command the Quetta column.

The several scenes of operations were so distinct that no intercommunication could take place, and thus the several commanders were entirely independent of each other, and received instructions direct from the headquarters of the Army and of Government.

On the 8th October I reached Mooltan, and found orders to "take command of the troops now at Quetta, and under orders to that "place."

The force thus placed under my command proved to be 3 regiments of cavalry, 7 of infantry, 1 field and 2 mountain batteries, 2 companies of sappers and miners, a field engineer and ordnance parks. About 6,400 men, and 16 guns.

It was about the 23rd of September when the corps began to move from Mooltan. The departure of troops from Jacobabad was delayed by the unusually extensive floods of the Indus.

The route taken from Mooltan was across two rivers, the Chenab and the Indus, to Dera-Ghazi-Khan, 46 miles; and although every facility was afforded by using steamers and flats in transporting the troops, crossing the rivers exposed the men and Officers to a sun which had not yet lost much of its violent heat. Long weary marches over tracts of desert and sterile hot low hills had to be traversed to reach the foot of the Bolan Pass.

The orders for the march were carried into effect by the local military authorities. The operation was a simple route march; but from the want of proper preparation at the important strategic point, Mooltan, the movement was not made without considerable strain in all the departments, particularly those of supply.

The principal features of the instructions were the scale of camp equipage and baggage was set at the lowest possible allowance, which was considered consistent with health and comfort, a month's provisions were to be sent with each corps, and commanders were warned that moving through the territory of a friendly chief—that of the Khan of Kelat—the people were to be treated with considera-

tion; at the same time all proper precautions were to be taken to guard against marauders.

At Mooltan I was joined by the following Officers of my Staff:—Major G. B. Wolseley, Assistant Adjutant-General; Captain H. B. Hanna, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General; Captain W. S. S. Bisset, R.E., Field Engineer; Captain W. G. Nicholson, R.E., Field Engineer.

During a delay of a few days at Mooltan, opportunity was taken to make demands for such articles and stores of which we were deficient. Captain Nicholson was instructed to remain behind and form a field mule train of tools and implements for blasting, and he was to bring with him ropes and cordage.

Our communications with distant departments were made by telegraph, but serious inconvenience was felt by the arsenal at Ferozepore being unconnected with the Lahore and Mooltan Railway.

Leaving much of the duty of collecting our requirements to General Murray, commanding at Mooltan, we set out on our way on the 13th by taking the steamer specially placed at our disposal, which was laden with commissariat stores, and with its attendant flats, gave ample accommodation to a detachment of troops and several Officers, with horses and followers.

On the third day we reached Mithunkot, on the right bank of the Indus, and we found this place to have a special importance, for the following reasons:—

The right bank of the Indus is here firm and sufficiently elevated above the level of surrounding lowlands subject to inundation, and there is opposite to Mithunkot a situation suitable for embarkation. Boats, steamers, and flats were collected, and it was intended either to construct a bridge or to transport troops and convoys across the Indus by ferry. And further, the country between Khanpur and the river admitted of the laying out a country road to bring the Mithunkot ferry into connection with the Indus Valley Railway.

Rajanpur, an important frontier station, headquarters of a regiment of cavalry and of infantry, is distant 12 miles. It is the most southerly link of the Derajat chain of military posts, and 72 miles from Dera-Ghazi-Khan, the headquarters of the district. From Rajanpur routes branch off in many directions. Of these the most interesting to us were one direct to the Bolan *viâ* Dera Bugti, and another leading to Vatakri and the Barkhan Plains *viâ* the Chachar Pass.

At Rajanpur, we met the 70th Foot, and E-4 field battery, halting to complete their provision columns. It will give some idea of the climate to notice here, that to shelter the men from the sun the 70th was encamped along the shady avenues and station roads, which were refreshingly cool and green in contrast to the *pāt* all around. This was the last time the troops enjoyed the luxury of shade, and a short period of repose here was much needed by the men.

Arrangements having been completed, the battery and regiment pursued their march, and I joined them on the 22nd at Bandowali, 40 miles distant. The instructions I had received placed me in communication with the agent of the Governor-General at Quetta,—Major

—now Sir Robert—Sandeman,—who was directed to co-operate with me. At Rajanpur I met the local civil authorities of the district, whose assistance to the troops, to myself, and the Staff was invaluable. At my desire it was arranged that I should be accompanied on the march through the Dera Bugti country by Mr. F. Fryer, the Deputy Commissioner of the district, and we were joined by the following Baluch Chiefs on the way:—Nawab Imam Buksh Khan Mazari; Nawab Jemal Khan Legari; Sirdar Miran Khan Drishak. These Chiefs, particularly the two first named, have exerted a highly beneficial influence over our border and Kelat policy. Connected by ties of family relationship and the possession of lands on both sides of the border, and fully possessed with the sense of our justice of purpose and desire for peaceable relations, they have thrown all the power of their influence to assist us; and this they have done with a steadiness of purpose and an ability which merits the highest consideration and praise.

Bandowali is a small fort, containing stabling, native lines, an Officer's quarter, and a well. It is possessed of sufficient defensive capabilities to withstand tribal attacks. Near, on the banks of the Indus, lies Rojan, the chief town of Imam Buksh Khan, and of the Mazari tribe. All round the fort, and to the westward in particular, the country is sandy desert.

The march of E-4 R.A. from Lalgoshi, 16 miles, the latter part of it over deep sand, had, although commenced in the night, caused such distress to bullocks and horses, and consequently to the men, that a halt was made to prepare for a more formidable march of 23 miles to the next camp, Kabrudani, to which place the road lies for the most part over sand. There is no water on the way.

The 70th Regiment, having experienced all the depressing influences of a hot season at Mooltan, which had enforced a constant confinement to barracks, and being suddenly set on the march at a season and in a country subject to great sun heat, suffered considerably from exposure caused by tedious escort and rear-guard duties. There were already 100 men unfit to march, for whom carriage had to be found. The situation of these corps, with so many marches of hot rough country before them, was critical, and special arrangements had to be originated to ensure their comfort and safety.

The preparations on the 23rd, in view to a night march on the 24th, were as follows:—Four wagons of E-4, of those drawn by bullocks, were emptied of their ammunition and placed for security in the fort, and the ammunition was packed suitably for camel transport. Camels were taken from a convoy to supply extra carriage for men unable to march, for whom the hospital establishments were insufficient. Camels were also taken for the ammunition of the four wagons.

Both corps were relieved of their provision columns and all extra baggage, and a convoy was formed, and marched on the evening of the 23rd, under arrangements made by Mr. Fryer, through the Mazari Chief Imam Buksh, who undertook to guard it with his own sowars. The tents could not be struck until the evening of the 24th, on account of the heat of the sun.

The march commenced at 8 P.M., the battery and its escort of 200 picked men of the 70th leading the way. It was a dark night, and we were ill provided with lanterns, which were much required. The surface of the country was soft loose sand intermixed with hummocks. We had hardly proceeded a mile when the forge came to a standstill. A halt of the whole column had to be called, and assistance was rendered to extricate the carriage. From 8 to 10 P.M. the wagons drawn by bullocks were constantly unable to move, and halts had to be made, and it was then evident that it would be a very difficult matter to carry out the march. I then decided to spare the 70th Regiment the exposure and fatigue of attending on the battery, and it was allowed to pursue its march. The battery, assisted by the escort, had to fight its way against unusual difficulties, and I and my Staff, with the Baluch Chief, remained to give such aid and counsel as might be appropriate.

From about 10 to 12 midnight the march proceeded with constant halts, on account of the carriages sticking in the deep sand. After a while a nulla was reached, and its surface appearing smooth, it was hoped that the traction would be lighter. The aspect, however, was deceptive; the wheels cut through the thin crust, and sank into the loose sand beneath, and the draught continued heavy throughout the night.

The progress was a successive movement; wagon after wagon stuck and was left behind. Halts were frequent, and gun and wagon teams had to be sent to bring up the rear carriages. Unhooking and hooking in went on throughout the night, and generally, to get the carriages along, a gallop had to be made for short distances at a time.

This kind of operation continued till about 3 A.M. of the 25th, and it was then calculated that there were yet 16 miles to make to reach the next camp at Kabrudani.

I now consulted with the Officer commanding the battery, Captain Beaver, and with Imam Buksh Khan, and to save men and horses from the burning sun and thirst of the coming day, a depôt of four wagons was made. By this reduction of the number of carriages, we hoped that our progress would be less impeded. They were parked and placed in charge of a few infantry, gunners, and Baluch Guides. A small supply of water was left and the march pursued.

Daylight came on, but the progress continued slow. Frequent halts were necessary, and bringing up carriages occupied us unceasingly.

It was clear that a further abandonment of carriages must be made, and the sun having risen, it was decided to proceed with the six guns only, and the men, horses, and cattle.

Teams of six pairs were therefore hooked to the guns, and the march was now continued without intermission for the remaining 14 miles. Water and food were sent back to the men left behind, and the carriages were extricated during the next day.

This march of 23 miles over desert sand, the most serious difficulty expected to be met with on the road to Quetta, having been overcome, the 70th Regiment preceded the battery, and the headquarter party drew ahead of the regiment.

The matters which now occupied my attention were the improvement of the road by a detachment of sappers under Lieutenant Sharpe, R.E., During the remainder of the march the Officer commanding the battery was required to associate himself with Lieutenant Sharpe, and to inspect the road, in order to direct the workmen to improve those parts which required it.

In other respects, on the whole march from the Indus to Quetta, the most conspicuous feature was the peaceable attitude of the tribes, and the loyal friendly co-operation of the Chiefs. This happy consummation has been brought about by the dexterous management of frontier Officers, and particularly by the tact and energy displayed by Major Sandeman and Mr. Fryer.

A peaceable movement was being made directly through the countries of the Bugtis and Maris, who had in former times been the scourge of the whole border, and who could now have inflicted incalculable injury.

On entering the Bugti territory, I was met by Kechi Khan, Chief of the Shambanis, a section of the Bugtis, and by Shabaz Khan, acting for his father as head of the whole tribe. At Sangsilla, the gateway towards Kahun, the chief town of the Maris, Mehr-Ulla Khan, Tumundar of the tribe, with his retinue and 80 horsemen received me, and proffered duty and aid to Her Majesty in respect to the movement of troops now going on by the border of his country. A durbar was held, in which I was assisted by Mr. Fryer; presents were given, and acknowledgements made to the assembled Chiefs on their friendly attitude.

The physical nature of the Dera Bugti hills presented considerable obstacles to the construction of a good road. We found the country deficient of water and forage, and liable in the hot weather to the fiercest heat. My attention was therefore turned to the cooler tract of country along the higher hills, through which it was known a road existed leading direct from Rajanpur to Pishin *viâ* Vatakri and Tal-Chotiali. It was during this march I made the resolve to examine the western end of this route as soon as I should be in a position to do so.

Quetta, 9th November.

It is time that we should now pass to the scene at Quetta. By the 9th November we had reached Quetta, and we found the native infantry corps sent to reinforce the Quetta garrison encamped around the little station in the midst of which stood the mud fort or Miri. The ground to the north of the settlement rises, and affords good sites for defensive camps.

The arrival of additional troops brought a sense of relief to the officials at Quetta. It was a critical time, and there had been signs which forboded ill to the small garrison. Colonel J. Browne, R.E., had been busy with the fortification of the fort, and Major Sandeman and his assistant, Mr. Bruce, aided by the Brahui Chiefs and the

Khan's sirdars, had been energetic in the work of pouring in supplies of all kinds.

The great important consideration on which we must congratulate ourselves was that our relations with the Khan of Kelat were firmly established, an agent resided at the Khan's headquarters, supported by a few troops, and there was telegraph communication to that place from Quetta.

The police duties of the Bolan Pass, the carrying of our post and the care of the line of telegraphs, were all being arranged for, and in every respect, our position on the plateau was very different now to what it had been in the former expeditions, when the Khan and the people were wavering or hostile, and when the want of food put our troops to the greatest straits and sacrifices.

By my direction, in concert with the Agent, the cavalry were located at Mustung for the sake of drawing on other sources of supply, and a more abundant produce of forage.

The measures which first engaged attention were to increase the scale of weights of clothing for native followers, and indeed for all ranks. So far as it was possible in this remote place, bedding and clothing were added where required, and posteens and warm jackets were purchased for the troops. The cold was intense at night, though the days were sunny and pleasant. Ill-clad natives, and those who had suffered from Quetta fever stood the severity of the weather badly, and caused me much anxiety.

On examining the several regimental hospitals, it was discovered that there was much to do to arrange accommodation for the sick; this was carried into effect by completing in a rough manner unfinished native lines and barracks.

The unfinished state of the station, want of roads, the encumbrement of the fort with empty houses and *débris*, and the want of sanatory arrangements imposed tasks of severe labour on Officers and troops and on the Staff. In the midst of all such work, preparations for a move had to be made, before the organization of the division could be completed.

So far the Brigade Staff, and commanders of Artillery and Engineers had not joined, and only three Officers of the Divisional Staff were present. There was no commissariat, and the undisciplined thousands of camels and their drivers unclothed and untrained represented ill our transport service. On the 13th I received intimation that I was to be ready to make an advance into Afghanistan, and on the 18th the following Officers arrived and made a welcome addition to our incomplete numbers:—Captain R. M. Stewart, R.A., Assistant Quartermaster-General; Colonel H. Moore, Assistant Quartermaster-General; Lieutenant-Colonel C. B. Le Mesurier, Commanding Royal Artillery; Lieutenant-Colonel W. Hichens, Commanding Royal Engineers; Deputy Surgeon-General T. Hendley, P.M.O.; Surgeon-Major W. G. Manley, V.C.

On the 18th and 19th I made in company with Major Sandeman a personal reconnaissance to Kujlak and the Afghan frontier and returned to Quetta. This examination afforded me, from suitable

heights on the Anjeram range and on the skirt of Takatū, a view over the country of Pishin and intermediate plains.

A depôt of provisions and wood was commenced at Kujlak. The 32nd Pioneers commenced to march, road making as they moved, and these operations were covered by the formation of an advanced guard at that place.

Previous to carrying out the desired movement a garrison was told off for Quetta, consisting of the 30th Bombay Native Infantry, two mountain guns, and a squadron of native cavalry. Colonel W. G. Mainwaring was appointed commandant.

The march of the force was carried out for convenience of organization and supply by successive detachments, and concentration was made afterwards at suitable points. As it was very desirable that seeking for supplies should be conducted without pressure and without causing irritation to the people, reconnaissances were made attended by experienced Officers who could speak the language, inviting the sale and concentration of such produce as we were in need of. To meet the wants of the troops in the first advance seven days' food and two days' firewood were carried. As we published our intentions of cash payment, no want of all ordinary produce and no reluctance in parting with it was experienced.

The first position taken up was at Urumzai, where I arrived with my Head-quarters on the 22nd. From that date to the 25th effect was given to the arrangements for the search for supplies, by sending forward reconnaissances as far as Haiklezai, and in preparing the roads for the artillery and camels. During this period time was given for the cavalry to come up from Mustung, and for the march of a column of observation to the north-east of Kujlak, consisting of two half battalions, two guns, and two squadrons, which was placed under the command of Colonel Clay, commanding 19th Bengal Native Infantry. This column was in a position to watch our communications, covering Kujlak, and was ready to commence a reconnaissance I had in view along the eastern border of Pishin.

On the 25th the main body of the force marched to the fine open plain of Sayad Yaru Karez, reconnaissances being at the same time conducted on the left flank and to the front.

On the 27th the force and the Head-quarters moved to Haiklezai, where it had been ascertained there was a suitable open position and where supplies were obtainable from the surrounding villages. On the same day, having transferred the command of the main body to the senior Officer present, Colonel Pigott, of the 70th Regiment, I joined Colonel Clay's reconnoitring column, and set it in motion towards the north-east along the border of the province. I was accompanied by Colonel Browne, R.E., an excellent reconnoitring Officer, well acquainted with Pushtoo and the Kakur tribes.

The object of this reconnaissance was to make our presence felt on the Kakur border, to examine the passes leading towards Sibi and to the historical Tal-Chotiali route, and at the same time to define the limits of the plains of the province along the east and north-east.

This reconnaissance terminated at Kushdil Khan Ka Killa, and was

very successful. The information gained opened the way for the movement of a column in the following spring, which completed the examination of the whole country from Pishin to Rajanpur and Dera-Ghazi-Khan.

Haiklezai.

At Haiklezai the main column halted until the 8th December. The instructions issued to me were scanty, and it may be well to mention here that it was not intended that I should move on to Kandahar until I was joined by the 1st Division, now on the march under command of General D. Stewart.

During the period the force was at Haiklezai, reconnaissances were made to the Kojuk, to the mouth of the Gwaja, and Lieutenant Wells, R.E., was directed to march through the Gazabund Pass from Quetta direct on Gulistan Karez, and to prepare the route for the passage of General Stewart's artillery, with a party of Ghilzai excavators.

About this time the organization was rendered more complete by the arrival of the Brigadiers:—Brigadier-General C. H. Palliser, C.B., Cavalry Brigade; Brigadier-General R. Lacy, 1st Infantry Brigade; Brigadier-General T. Nuthall, 2nd Infantry Brigade.

General Nuthall was sent to Abdulla Khan Ka Killa to command the advance guard, General Palliser to Kushdil Khan Ka Killa to command Colonel Clay's force, and General Lacy commanded the Head-quarter column.

So far the season was most favourable, no rain or snow had fallen, as generally is the case at this time of the year; latterly, however, overcast days reminded us that snow might hamper our movements, and impelled me to endeavour to get the force over the Kojuk while fine weather lasted.

At Haiklezai a post was temporarily established in some farm buildings. A small garrison was placed in Kushdil Khan Ka Killa, and a cavalry post was fixed at Sayad Yaru Karez. These three posts were ordered to circulate reports of their well being or otherwise, and were intended to act as a link in the line of communications.

On my commencing to exercise command at Quetta, I published a notification to the force that actual manual labour of the troops of all corps, native and European, must form a very considerable part of our daily duty. Officers were to devote themselves to the intelligent execution of the works which would be pointed out by the Engineer Officers. I am happy to say that my views were thoroughly appreciated, and the energy and intelligence displayed by all corps were now destined to bear good fruits.

The movements which preceded the operations on the Kojuk were the examination in a preliminary manner of the Gwaja and the country to the south of Pishin. This reconnaissance and an excursion of a small party to the top of the Kojuk, enabled me to judge of the comparative merits of the passes, and to decide to operate on the Kojuk, which proved to be the most direct line from my

position, leading through the best watered and most productive country.

The plain of Abdulla Khan Ka Killa affords an encampment suitable for a lengthened halt, and there I settled the main body of the force on the 12th December.

At the same time a post was formed at the very foot of the pass, at a place called, in the old account, Churza, by us named Kojuk camp.

This post, destined to be occupied by camps of working parties, by the successive portions of the force and by convoys, was the upper portion of the Kojuk Nulla, which at about two miles from the summit is hemmed in by hills and only just wide enough for a line of encampments and a roadway. From Abdulla Khan to the camp, the natural bed of the nulla answered all purposes of a road, but the 1¼ miles to the crest and the steep descent on the north side required a good deal of labour. At the foot of the north steep slope a nulla is reached, which descends by a uniform gradient to Chaman, about 2¼ miles from the foot of the abrupt portion.

An examination of the pass by Colonels Hichens and Browne, R.E., enabled us to judge on the 11th where to apply our labour, and on the 12th a column commanded by Colonel Kennedy, 2nd Punjab Cavalry, was located at the Kojuk Pass, and the works commenced.

In the meantime Palliser's column was moved along the Daman road, reconnoitring and feeding itself, and ordering supplies to be concentrated at Abdulla Khan. The course of this column was now directed across our rear to Gulistan Karez, in view to its holding there a point of observation, and carrying out a more complete examination of the Gwaja Pass.

It was during this period that Captain Hanna, of the Quarter-master-General's Department, collated the materials from the several reconnoitring bodies to form a map of Pishin, which had now been fairly well explored. At starting there was no special survey party, and our method was rough, but effective. Colonel Browne gave the points of the principal mountains, and these were transferred to Officers who accompanied the reconnaissance columns, and the work was executed rapidly by taking cross bearings.

I may say here, that we had no reliable maps of the country, and those we possessed were of old date, and gave very wrong impressions.

The first operation at Camp Kojuk was to improve the water supply, which was done by making pools in the gorge, into which the springs trickled at the side of the track. As the water was only found high up in the narrow gorge, the watering of so many animals and men occasioned blocks and inconvenience, and hours for watering were arranged.

The tracks found on the Kojuk were only fit for footmen, mules, or donkeys. A few camels struggled over, but for laden camels and wheeled artillery the pass was absolutely impracticable. It was decided to improve the steep gorge to the top, and bring the old zigzag of 1839–42 again into use for the passage of the first detachments.

Colonel Hichens, assisted by Captain Nicholson and his field park, opened operations on the road-making of the pass on the 13th. The troops set to this work were the 5th and 9th Companies of Sappers under Lieutenants Hill, Maxwell, and Sharpe, R.E.; the 32nd Pioneers commanded by Colonel Fellowes, the 26th Punjab Native Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, and the gang of Ghilzais in charge of Lieutenant Wells. Covering the operations Colonel Kennedy reconnoitred with his cavalry beyond the pass, and the 1st Punjab Native Infantry crowned the heights under command of Major Keen.

In the gorge on the south side, a good deal of wedging and blasting in a very stubborn formation of rock had to be done, to bring the bed to a sufficient width and equality of gradient for the passage of the guns. This, with much labour and persistency was accomplished, but though the north slope was a softer strata, its extreme abruptness rendered it impossible, within a given short time, to prepare a road fit for wheeled artillery.

On the evening of the 14th, the pass was reported fit for the passage of infantry and cavalry and mountain guns; and on the 15th Colonel Kennedy moved the advance guard, consisting of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, the 1st Punjab Native Infantry, and two mountain guns, to Chaman. 450 baggage camels were marched over with no serious accident.

In consultation with Colonel Hichens and Colonel Le Mesurier, we now decided that to pass over wheeled artillery it would take at least a fortnight to make a road for the descent of the guns and wagons, even if the horses were unhooked and the carriages let down by hand. We resolved, therefore, to improve a tolerably straight gully into a ramp, and to let the guns down by ropes, which Captain Nicholson had brought with him. The ramp or slide was at an angle of about 31° and 500 feet long, and had one slight turn in direction. It led from the crest to the commencement of the inclined bed of the valley leading to Chaman. The heights of the several points, and an idea of the roads and slide, may be obtained from the plan furnished by Colonel Hichens accompanying this paper. At the top of the pass, platforms were provided for parking the carriages, and for the party working the ropes. On the 18th the slide was reported fit for the artillery, and on the next day the E Battery, 4th Brigade, commenced to make the descent.

The descent of the guns was a very interesting and satisfactory operation, and was well managed by the Artillery Officers and men assisted by working parties of infantry, under the direction of Colonel Le Mesurier.

The carriages being unlimbered, the operation was performed by sending down a limber, a body, or a gun only, at a time. There was no let or hindrance in the performance; the stout rope was securely attached to the carriage, and one or two men attended in the descent, the rope being held by a working party on the platform. An Officer watched and directed from the top, and another received the carriages at the bottom. At the turn a few men were stationed to change the direction. The carriages were driven up the plateau on to the crest, and

were put together again some little distance below the foot of the slide. The passing a battery over took about 1½ days, and though laborious, was completely successful.

In the meantime roads were improved, and some new pathways opened up to provide for return laden camels and general traffic. A Field Officer was appointed as superintendent of traffic, with full control over the pass, having communication by heliograph with stations on both sides of the Kojuk. The passage of convoys was managed on the system adopted at railway stations, and blocks were thus avoided and the free passage regulated.

While on this subject, it may be as well to explain here that from the first it was felt that the operations would not be complete until a proper cart road could be made. A track was therefore surveyed by Colonel Hichens, who set Lieutenant Wells to work with his Ghilzais, and here the party was left to carry out the operation. In the month of March, when I returned over the Kojuk, a 13-foot road was found completed, having a gradient of a maximum of 1 in 10. A train of carts was then making a passage of the Khoja Amran Range laden with telegraph material which had been brought up from Sind. These were the first wheeled vehicles which had ever reached Khorassan from India.

In the midst of the operations on the Kojuk, General—now Sir Donald—Stewart arrived and assumed supreme command, and I remained in command of the advance column, which was constituted as the 2nd Division.

In order to decide on the possibility of making use of the Gwaja Pass, and adapting it to the passage of General Stewart's heavy artillery, a reconnaissance was sent, accompanied by the senior Artillery and Engineer Officers, out through the Gwaja, round by the plains of the north side, and back over the Kojuk, making a complete circuit. The result of this study of both passes caused General Stewart to commence work on the Gwaja, and a portion of my troops was moved there to carry out the operations, under the superintendence of Colonel Sankey, R.E.

As soon as working parties, now much reduced on account of work in the Gwaja, could be spared, a site was chosen for a redoubt at Chaman to guard the exit of the pass and depôt of stores which was being formed there.

The passage of the Kojuk was going on from the 19th to the end of the month without intermission. Three batteries of artillery were brought over in succession, large convoys of 900 laden camels, and the same number of unladen on return were got over. Transit over the pass was reduced to a regular system.

In the meantime the cavalry were occupied in the Kadani Plain at distances up to 25 miles from the Khoja Amran searching for roads, water, and supplies.

The scene on the crest of the pass was now very animated. Every path and zigzag was thronged by streams of troops, laden and unladen camels, going to and fro. Horses were led down to the foot of the slide to be hooked in there. On a pinnacle of the range, Lieutenant

Smith, of the 70th Regiment, with signalers of his corps and of the 11-11 Battery, were carrying on a complicated correspondence with five stations, two of the cavalry brigade in the Kadani plain, one at Chaman, one at Kojuk camp, and one at Killa Abdulla. Gulistan Karez was now connected with that place by a cable. We were not well supplied with heliograph instruments, and could have used many more. Fortunately Captain Bishop, 2nd Punjab Cavalry, assisted us ably with one of his own. Altogether the heliograph did us good service at this particular time.

On the departure of the Army from Pishin towards Kandahar, the Gwaja route having been used by the heavy artillery, was abandoned, and the Kojuk became the established route.

The maintenance of our line of communication was provided for in the first instance by placing the 1st Punjab Native Infantry, Major Keen, at Gulistan Karez, as the first instalment of a movable column for Pishin. A company of the same regiment was detached under command of Captain Lorne Campbell, and located on the Kojuk, where on the crest a picket was placed and maintained day and night throughout the whole winter. This arduous duty was performed with great steadiness and devotion in a very severe climate.

At Chaman the fort was gradually improved, and a small force of all arms was stationed to watch the north end of the pass at that place. On the road to Kandahar detachments of 40 cavalry were posted at intervals of about two marches.

Hitherto our proceedings had not been interfered with by either the Kakurs or Achukzais. The Kakurs once threatened our post in the Sayad Yaru Plain, but a prompt movement had warded off the blow. The Achukzais declared openly that they only waited for an opportunity when the columns should have marched on towards Kandahar to commence their enterprises.

In the latter days of December we were engaged in the passage of the Kojuk, which gave a full measure of daily occupation to the engineers and to the Staff, as well as to the Commissariat and Transport Departments, and to the troops crossing over to Chaman. About this time a redistribution of troops took place, consequent on the passage of some of General Stewart's troops by the Kojuk, and the employment of mine in the Gwaja. Cavalry posts beyond Chaman were placed under charge of Major Clifford, 2nd Punjab Cavalry, and letter-carrying from the Indus to the limits of Pishin was arranged for by Major Sandeman, by native levies.

By the troops at Abdulla Khan, Christmas Day was observed as a holiday. Extra rations were served out, wood for cooking and for bonfires was collected, and every Officer and soldier enjoyed a good plain dinner, and the warmth and light of the camp fire. All were overjoyed at the prospect of a speedy advance, and, full of the hope of adventure. Orders were issued by General Stewart, from his Headquarters at Gulistan Karez, for the march of the whole force by divisions, the first through the Gwaja, and the second division through the Kojuk. On the third day concentration was to be made at Takhtipul. European troops were to take 15 days, and native troops

7 days' supplies. Corps proceeding by the Gwaja were to carry firewood.

On the 1st January General Palliser, commanding the cavalry, was one or two marches in advance, in the plains of Kadani. Half of the cavalry, with 3 guns of A-B Royal Horse Artillery, to each body, was in front of each of the passes. The advance guard in my front was commanded by Colonel Kennedy.

Previous to the onward movement, Palliser's line was strengthened by the Sapper companies, Pioneers, Baluchis, and 25th Native Infantry. The engineer parks were also moved to the front.

On the 2nd January Palliser's force took up the line, Shah Pussund and Fatti Ulla Khan, and reconnoitred into the Mêl Valley.

The troops of the main body of the 2nd Division were told off into two columns; the leading one commanded by Brigadier-General Nuthall, the rear column, commanded by Brigadier-General Lacy.

Now so long as our columns were stationary, while General Stewart was at Gulistan Karez, the intercommunication between the divisional headquarters was very perfect, but directly the movement began, although we were only separated by about 25 miles of direct distance, all communication ceased. Between our advance column and myself correspondence was well established and maintained throughout the march, I was able during the first two days to receive but scanty information from General Stewart's Head-quarters.

The reason of this was because the country was intricate. Mounted guides could not be procured, and signalers and heliographs were not supplied in sufficient numbers. Further, we found it to be exceedingly difficult without pre-arranged points to pick up chance flashes from distant stations whose positions we were not accurately informed of.

Although we had no enemy to contend with, the movement we were making was one of great interest, the overcoming the difficulties which arose in procuring supplies, the actual marching and care of baggage, and the mastering the physical difficulties of the country, excited a healthy spirit of energy in all ranks. At the same time there was a satisfaction in clearing away from the passes, which had delayed us so long.

On the 1st January the 2nd Division Head-quarters moved to Chaman, and on the 3rd General Nuthall's column, which I joined, commenced the march. General Lacy was ordered to follow on the 4th.

We were now crossing the great plains which are spread out like a glacis in front of the Khoja Amran. On the left of General Stewart's line of march lay the desert, and on my right, the Kadani Valley appeared an open country for many marches. As this valley had not been sufficiently reconnoitred, I deemed it requisite to watch and patrol in that direction with great care.

On the 5th January Colonel Kennedy met the enemy's cavalry at the Glo Kotal. He drove them through the pass with some loss on their part, and retreating into the Takhtipul Plain, the Afghan horse were met by a squadron of the 15th Hussars under Major Luck, who

charged and dispersed them; 12 or 13 Afghans were killed and some prisoners taken.

On the line of advance of the other column, there was also an engagement with the enemy, who withdrew with some loss and retreated on Kandahar. This first encounter with the Afghan troops did not promise to us the sturdy resistance we had hoped for.

The concentration was effected at Takhtipul, and preparations were made for the entry from the Turnak Valley into the Kandahar Plain by two passes, where resistance was expected. On the march to the Turnak the information reached us from General Stewart, who was in front, that Mir Afzul had fled, and that the Kandahar troops had dispersed or followed him. The city was open to our entry, and the people prayed for the advance of the troops to keep order, lest there should be a reign of terror.

On the 8th the force made a ceremonial march through the city, and, delayed by the intricacy of the road, the rear guard did not reach camp till long after dark. The whole force encamped in the open plain in one line facing Ghazni, and enjoyed a short repose after their recent continued exertions.

As we left the country of the Achukzais to the guardianship of the posts on the Kojuk and the neighbourhood, they thought the time had arrived when they might conveniently enter on their operations. The first act committed by them was the murder of a native commissariat clerk and two sepoys, who happened to be detached. One sepoy escaped to tell the tale.

After this deed of prowess, the Achukzais were encouraged to combine together to attack a convoy guard of the 1st Punjab Native Infantry, which was encamped for a night at Killa Abdulla Khan.

The Subudar commanding, a Khuttuk Pathan, by name Faiztullub, proved to be a man of the right sort. Having some information of the threatened attack which was to take place after nightfall, Faiztullub made arrangements to strike his tents after dusk. The 40 sepoys with him were ordered to lie snug and quiet watching for the enemy. As soon as the Achukzais, several hundred strong, drew near, the sepoys opened fire. The attack was made with determination, and the resistance of Faiztullub and his men was stout. Some of the enemy were shot and bayonetted at close quarters, and having had enough, the Achukzais withdrew. I afterwards thanked Faiztullub in the presence of the regiment for the fine service he had rendered on our communications at an important time.

Not long after this affair, our convoys were molested and robbed in the Kadani Plain, near Chaman, by Lushkur Khan, who, with his sons and clansmen of the Achukzais, had long been a terror to the whole country.

On the march of the troops from Chaman, I had been careful to instruct the Officer commanding the small garrison there not to allow himself to be enticed into any action at a distance from his post. It would seem, therefore, that on the perpetration of an outrage by Lushkur Khan, Lieutenant Wells, R.E., and a medical Officer, attended by a few sowars, volunteered to go and punish the gang of banditti.

Now the position of the small posts on the Kojuk was not an enviable one. They were surrounded with mountains which might at any moment afford a screen behind which a body of Achukzais might assemble with the view of assailing all points at the same moment. Any sign of weakness on the part of our people might have led to the most serious consequences. I have no doubt that this feeling was held by every Officer there.

The banditti were numerous and defiant, and made light of so apparently insignificant an enemy. Lushkur Khan being summoned to surrender, refused, and was attacked by Wells and his companions, and the bandit and his sons died fighting. This affair, which was a gallant act, caused rejoicing throughout all the country side, even as far as Kandahar, where the merchants felt that there was one notorious robber the less to lay contributions on their kafilas.

After these lessons, the Achukzais remained quiet, and they subsequently rendered good service through the instrumentality of Major Sandeman, in charge of the very communications which they had commenced to molest.

Kandahar to the Helmund.

As it is beyond the intention of this lecture to detail the whole of the features of so extended a march, I pass hastily over the movement from the Kojuk on Kandahar. The opposition made at Takhtipul was insignificant, and the flight of Mir Afzul Khan and the dispersion of the Afghan troops opened the way for the peaceable entry of the columns under General Stewart's command on the 8th January. We had only arrived in time; any delay might have caused grave disorder and bloodshed.

The Hindoos and traders welcomed us warmly, and business was resumed. The attitude of the people in general was impassive. Those of Persian origin showed marked signs of satisfaction at our presence.

From the 8th to the 14th, the 2nd Division was occupied in preparations for a movement to the Helmund. The sick and those in any way unfit for the march were cared for and left behind. Unnecessary native followers were sent back to India, and the Commissariat and Transport Services were more perfectly organized. In all these matters we were very busy.

The 2nd Division lent the services of Brigadier-General Nuthall, who was appointed to the command of the garrison of Kandahar. Captain Bisset, who had done such good service on the march and at Quetta, was left to undertake the serious task of putting the fort and palace, which was in a state of dirt, decay, and confusion, into a condition suitable for hospitals and the many requirements of an army.

On the 15th January General Stewart with the 1st Division marched towards Kelat-i-Ghilzai.

The 2nd Division having given some corps to form the Kandahar garrison now consisted of the following:—

5th and 10th Companies Bengal Sappers, to which was attached a train of 2 pontoon boats.

The Engineer field park;—mule train.

I Battery 1st Brigade Royal Artillery.

2 guns 11th Battery 11th Brigade;—mountain train.

4 guns No. 3 Peshawur Mountain Battery.

2nd Punjab Cavalry, Kennedy.

3rd Sind Horse, Malcolmson.

70th Foot, Pigott.

Half a battalion 19th Bengal Native Infantry.

29th Bombay Native Infantry; 2nd Baluchis.

32nd Bengal Native Infantry, Pioneers.

Brigadier-General Palliser, C.B., commanded the cavalry and fell into command of the advance column. Brigadier-General Lacy commanded the infantry, and ultimately the rear column.

The division received several additions to the Staff.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. Moore, C.I.E., was constituted Political Officer to the force, and organized a staff of native officials, Afghan sowars, and a postal service.

The Commissariat Staff was completed and placed under the charge of Captain Luckhardt, who was assisted by three other Officers of the Department. Although the camels had suffered severely from the severe cold, privations, and constant movement, they were somewhat rested. The system of regimental care was better understood and practised. The camels were, however, after all weak, and required warmth and repose. Eventually we were able, on the march to the Helmund, to add to their number by purchasing strong hardy Khorassan camels from the edge of the desert, and bullocks and donkeys were also brought into use.

The Survey Department was now represented by Captain Beavan, who had with him a regular staff of assistants.

Captain Dickie, R.E., was in charge of heliographs and signaling.

On the 10th in company with Captain Stewart, I examined the road to and camping ground at Kokeran, and ordered the roads to be prepared for the artillery. The suburbs of Kandahar have never been traversed by wheels, and the streets of the villages, and the bridges over watercourses, are narrow and not fitted for wheels.

On the 14th General Palliser moved the cavalry to Kokeran, with orders to commence the operation of collecting supplies and to pave the way for the march of the main body.

I understood the movement towards the Helmund was made as a reconnaisance in force, with the object of opening new sources of supply, and with the view at the same time of withdrawing a large portion of the troops from consuming the products of the immediate neighbourhood of Kandahar, and the food being brought from India.

As regards time, I conceived we were under no pressure. The obligation appeared to be to regulate the movement so that leisure should be afforded to admit of the collection of supplies of food without causing violent measures and unnecessary excitement among the people. Colonel Moore entered fully into those views, and, accom-

panying the advance guard, organized a system of dealing with the inhabitants as far as possible through the Malicks of the principal villages.

In addition to the necessity there was to march leisurely, to give time for the collection of supplies, it was obligatory to husband the strength of our camels by giving them repose and time for grazing. Halts of one or two days were made according as we found the country able to support us, and the days of halting were fully occupied in reconnoitring, survey work, and collecting food.

On the 16th January, the Head-quarters and the main body of the 2nd Division commenced the march to the Helmund, and encamped at Kokeran. The situation of the camp, looking up the Argandab Valley, was lovely. The troops were in the highest spirits at escaping from the neighbourhood of Kandahar, and ready for a movement into new scenes, and for any adventure which might turn up. Some were ardent enough to expect we might reach Herat.

On the 17th, the Sappers and Pioneers, under the Engineers, prepared ramps to the ford over the Argandab, and improved the roads through the cultivated grounds on the right bank. The 32nd Pioneers joined General Palliser at Sinjuri the same evening.

On the 18th, General Lacy and Divisional Head-quarters moved to Sinjuri. General Palliser made a march forward, and the advance column was thus regulated in subordination to the movement of the main body.

On the 23rd, General Lacy reached Atta Karez, about 31 miles from Kandahar. Between Sinjuri and Atta Karez the country is one vast skirt of the mountains, and no road making was necessary; all the obstructions were between Kokeran and Sinjuri, in the neighbourhood of the river.

At Atta Karez I felt that we were about to quit the broad alluvial cultivated lands of the Doaba, and enter on the narrow strip of productive country lying along the Argandab. Two roads strike off from here to Girishk; of these I chose that along the Argandab for the march of the division, as it passed through a comparatively better supplied district.

In order to watch the country on our right flank, and to reconnoitre the direct road to the Helmund, I sent a small force under command of Colonel Tanner, 2nd Baluchis, with orders to conform his movements to that of the leading column. With this view the flank guard moved to Chaoni, at Kishki Nakhud on the 25th. On the same day the main column moved to Killa Saidal.

During the days which preceded this movement, the whole of the Doab of the Argandab and Dori rivers was overrun and surveyed, and I seized an opportunity myself of visiting a remarkable point on the edge of the desert where the Dori passes through an important gap in the hills.

As we proceeded westwards and reached a less productive country, it was perceived that there would be great difficulty in making the move of the whole force to Girishk in one body.

I therefore joined General Palliser's column, and at the same time

reinforced it with the Peshawur Mountain Battery, the 10th Company Sappers, and the pontoons. At the same time General Lacy, who had reached a more forward position, was ordered to move back to the neighbourhood of Atta Karez and Hauz-i-Muddud Khan, where supplies were more plentiful. The operation of reaching the Helmund was complicated by the completely unproductive nature of the country between Bala Khana and Abbaza, a village on the left bank opposite to Girishk.

A reconnaissance was made to Abbaza, and the principal personage of Girishk summoned to our assistance.

On the 29th I made a reconnaissance in force, forded the Helmund, visited the castle, selected positions for camps, and returned to Bala Khana.

On the 30th an advanced guard, under Colonel Kennedy, composed of 2nd Punjab Cavalry, the Engineers, Sappers, and Pioneers, encamped at Abbaza (erroneously called Obostan in some of the reports). At the same time Colonel Tanner with the flank guard came in from the north direct road. Colonel Moore, and his native officials and the Commissariat Officers, at once proceeded to gather in supplies on both banks of the river.

On the 31st the advance column was further augmented by the movement of Colonel Nicholetts with half a battalion of his corps, the 2nd Baluchis. A position was taken up on the cliff above Abbaza for the Head-quarter camp, which was supported by a detachment of cavalry, the Peshawur Mountain Battery, and the Baluchis.

The fort of Girishk, though dilapidated, proved of much service as a military post. Colonel Tanner was constituted commandant with a small garrison of Baluchis and Pioneers. Shelter was there found for the sick of the advance guard, for a commissariat store, and the garrison.

In a few days the advance guard was settled in a position on the open plain facing Herat, a little to the south of the castle. General Palliser commanded on the right bank, and had in camp with him the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, 3rd Sind Horse, the Sappers and the Pioneers. Detachments of the two latter corps, were posted on either bank of the river, who, assisted by hired boatmen of Abbaza, managed the operations of the ferry.

In the flight of Mir Afzul, attempts had been made to destroy all the ferry boats; the boatmen, however, hid one by sinking it, and the boat, having been produced, was exceedingly useful to us. Colonel Hichens placed all the business of the ferry under charge of Lieutenant Browne, R.E. Hawsers were stretched from bank to bank, and a pontoon raft and the ferry boat were hauled over and back by gangs of boatmen. This method answered completely, and the ferry was a busy scene of traffic from daylight to nightfall.

At this season we found the river about $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 feet deep at the ford; the current was strong. The ford led diagonally across the stream, and any deviation from the track led into deep water. After passing the main stream a branch was found also deep and flowing swiftly. The passage of the river required great care and precaution;

all the baggage had to be transported by the ferry. Unladen camels and mounted Officers and cavalry crossed easily. Infantry passed over the ferry.

Altogether the passage of the river was a serious obstacle, and occupied our attention continually. Colonel Hichens commenced making a bridge out of the rough timber found in the valley, but we were recalled before we could complete it.

Gradually roads were constructed, fit for wheeled artillery, leading from the plateau to the river and across the valley to the camp of the advance guard. Until this road was complete the inter-communication by narrow winding paths over watercourses was very intricate, and it was almost impassable between the two positions at night. The road, however, added much to our security. It was straight and broad, and perfectly traversible at all hours. Heliographic communication provided a means of correspondence by day, but at night we required signal lights, and these we were improvising just as our stay came to an end.

The position on the Helmund is very different from what I was led to suppose it to be from a study of the maps. There are no hills at Girishk. The formation there is as described in Part I. A vast plane elevated about 50 feet above the alluvial valley which is about two miles wide. From our position on the cliff above Abbaza, we dominated both ford and ferry, and the whole valley up to the advance guard camp and the castle of Girishk. Promontories which jut out encircle the Abbaza reach of the river, and present fine positions for covering the passages by infantry and artillery fire.

There are other passages of the Helmund, both above and below Girishk, but the one at Abbaza seems to be at present the safest, and this is the passage most commonly used. At Kaji Byuk, two miles above Abbaza, there is a ford, but it is deeper and more intricate. It stands at the end of the north road, and is commanded by favourable ground from the left bank. These features gave security to our position. The Head-quarter camp commanded the passages; nevertheless our situation was critical, divided as we were by such an obstacle as lay between the two camps. Zamindawar, the country of the Alizais, a warlike tribe, was only 25 miles distant. There were signs of excitement in that quarter, and a blow was threatened on both banks at the same time. Had an attack been made, we should have been found weak in numbers, as the troops were much occupied in distant expeditions, reconnoitring, and bringing in supplies.

My instructions were to avoid all enterprises which might cause irritation to the inhabitants, and it was a nice matter to conduct our search for food in such a manner, so as to stop short of actual force.

In the work of completing the passages of the river, in survey, and reconnaissance duties, and in the matters of supply, every Officer, soldier, follower, and animal of the force was fully engaged day by day. It was a season of constant activity. At the same time the imperative duties of watch and guard reduced the hours of repose.

The season spent in this distant part was cheered by adventure and by the knowledge that our labours were recognised. In these days an

order was published by General Stewart conveying the satisfaction of the Viceroy at the conduct of the operations as far as Kandahar. "Accept and convey to the troops my warm congratulations on entry "into Kandahar and successful accomplishment of the long and "arduous march from the Indus to that city." For myself and others there were signs of the interest of many friends who were earnestly watching our movements.

We maintained our position on the Helmund till the 23rd of February, when the force retired. Although it had been my wish to render the situation more secure, I was not able to move up reinforcements on account of the difficulty of supply. An order was issued for the march to the front of the 70th, and two guns of 11-11, but our recall obliged me to counter-order the movement.

Our retirement proved to be part of a scheme for the reduction of the numbers of the troops in Afghanistan before the hot weather should set in, a measure framed on the idea that matters were about to be permanently settled. It was a movement which caused a bitter feeling of disappointment to every Officer and soldier of the force, to myself, and some of the Staff and troops. There was some solace found in hearing that we were to explore the entirely unknown country between Pishin and the Derajat on our return march.

During our stay at Abbaza reconnaissances were pushed for two or three marches towards Herat, both on the road which leads through Washir and on those which are directed on Kash and Furrah.

Careful surveys were made up the valley of the Helmund to the border of Zamindawar and to Sungin on the left bank. To the south we thoroughly explored the Doab to Kala Bist, and the valley for some distance below that place.

While on the excursion to this most interesting ancient city, on the history of which my friend, Colonel Yule, has furnished me a paper for the Appendix, information reached me of the excitement of the Alizais and other tribes, and of threatened attacks. The number of the troops at Girishk being much reduced by the absence of the reconnoitring columns, I passed the Helmund a mile above Kala Bist, fording the river with mountain guns and infantry, and made a forced march up to Girishk to strengthen General Palliser's position. We reached Abbaza on the 19th; the remaining four days, till our departure, were occupied in withdrawing the sick and impedimenta from the right bank, and in watching for a convoy expected from a distance of 40 miles down the Helmund, and one from Kandahar, which should provide the supplies necessary for the march. During these days strong reconnaissances touched the Zamindawar border daily, and formed junctions with the expected convoys.

These precautions were sufficient to ward off the intended attack for a time, and we left the Helmund without interference.

It was part of the plan of the retirement that, while the main body was gaining the road towards Kishki Nakhud, Colonel Malcolmson should watch the fords from Zamindawar in the neighbourhood of Surwan Kala and Sungin. Colonel Malcolmson had orders to time his withdrawal so as to keep one march in rear of Palliser's column,

acting as rear guard. In the meantime the 70th Regiment, being required to return to India, Lacy's column was put in movement towards Kandahar. On the 26th, Palliser was at Atta Karez, while Malcolmson and Tanner reached Kishki Nakhud.

That evening Malcolmson was suddenly attacked by 1,500 Alizais and others. The enemy had marched diagonally 30 miles that day along the foot of the hills, approaching the camp with caution, and giving very little notice of their advance. Malcolmson and Tanner, however, with their Officers and men, were full of fight, quite ready for the occasion. A severe lesson was administered. I had to regret the loss of Major Reynolds, 3rd Sind Horse, a gallant and talented Officer, and a few sowars killed. The enemy lost 150 men.

While at Kishki Nakhud I very carefully studied the position which I describe as the trilateral of Atta Karez, Kishki Nakhud, Killa Suidal.

Kishki Nakhud is situated at the entrance to the Mainwand and Khakrez Valleys. A fair way leads towards Zamindawar from here *viâ* Gurmab, and a column which might be directed from there towards Kandahar would have to make for Kishki Nakhud in order to pass round the spur which terminates there.[1]

Strategic Considerations of the Country to the West of Kandahar.

The Helmund country, known as the Pusht-i-Rud Government, extends from the slopes of the Sia Koh and the Musa-Helmund Doab or Zamindawar down to Gurmsel, which is the district about Bost. To the westward the boundary is the Kash Rud.

The acquisition of this province, so valuable on account of its produce, would be the first aim of an invader marching from Herat.

It is not easy to understand how any columns of any considerable magnitude could commence a movement either from Persia through Seistan or from Herat without due preparation in gathering supplies at all the stages, as far as this could be done unopposed. Such operations would cause a great stir throughout the whole country, and early and full information would surely be given of any contemplated advance. We know now by experience that marches of considerable bodies of troops cannot be made through such countries without proper precautions which take time to carry into effect.

The concentration of an army having been made, and the provisions, munitions, and war *matériel* having been prepared (no small undertaking in the centre of Asia), the invader may direct his column along three roads, viz., the northern one *viâ* Washir, the middle one *viâ* Furrah, or the south one, which follows the great bend of the Helmund. This latter route as it passes through a belt of country fairly well provided with four great requirements—water, food for troops, grass and food for animals, and firewood—would surely be used for a great

[1] It should be understood that mountain ranges, spurs, and isolated hills are generally throughout all Khorassan quite impracticable for extensive military operations on account of want of water, and their extremely rugged formation.

portion of the force. This gives to Bost and its neighbourhood the importance which it has held in all ages.

The position of Girishk-Abbaza is with the most modest precaution unassailable. Those of the Upper Helmund can only be gained by the invader exposing his right flank, and he could not therefore avoid retaining or attacking Girishk.

The defenders would think it wise not to oppose any serious resistance on the Kash Rud beyond that which is necessary to oblige his enemy to show his hand, and to harass his advance.

The line of the Helmund, though extending for 75 miles, has many good positions, so that all the passages of the river can be defended by suitable works at short notice. These are now all pretty well studied, and works could be constructed at once if the material were at hand.

The position for locating the main defences would be at the trilateral of Atta Karez; and the troops in support would be well placed on the communications in the vicinity of the Argandab Valley and the Doaba.

The Helmund would therefore be considered the first line, and Kishki Nakhud, Saidal Killa, Atta Karez, the second line of defence. If a third line should be necessary, one may be found on the arc which extends from the desert edge, at the point where the Dori escapes from the hills along a semicircle, passing through Sung Hissar, Sinjuri, and Khwak. Within this semicircle are to be found all the obstructions which encumber the country to the west of Kandahar. Inside the arc lies also all the productive country, while without it the country is sterile and an open glacis.

Such is the nature of the country immediately west of Kandahar. Here the great route from Central Asia to India, which has less physical obstacles than any other passes through a narrow gateway. It seems to me that even though invasion may be remote, the possession of this point has an importance which cannot be rated too highly. The province is rich and well able to supply all the food necessary for an army.

It is unnecessary to follow here further the course of the march to Kandahar. On our arrival the 2nd Division was broken up, some of the corps and the Staff with myself were hastened off return to India by the new route. We left our comrades behind with deepest regret.

Part 4.

The Return March to the Indus.

Introduction.

While on the Helmund, about the 15th of February I received through Lieutenant-General Stewart the orders of Government for the return to India of certain corps by the Tal-Chotiali route, and the importance of carrying out the movement before the great heat might

set in was impressed on me. On the 1st March I reached Kandahar, and having written despatches and broken up the division and set corps in movement towards Pishin, I with my Staff left Kandahar on the 7th idem.

The Tal-Chotiali route, which, on account of our position at Quetta, had become interesting, had been studied so far as it could be without actual examination, by reading the histories translated by Raferty, and by the examination of native guides.

In the old accounts we learned that in the reign of Akbar carriers are said to have been in the constant habit of reaching Mooltan from Kandahar by this route in six days, and on one occasion a distinguished traveller of the Royal clan made the journey on a riding camel to Kandahar in eight days.

The expedition of Muhammad-i-Dara Shukoh, in 1653, against Kandahar—"one of the keys of India"—was made through this same country. We know that with his army, which numbered 104,000 men (besides followers), 70,000 being cavalry, Dara Shukoh took considerable munitions of war; among these there were 10 siege guns and 30 of smaller calibre, also 30,000 shot, 60,000 lbs. lead, and 200,000 lbs. of gunpowder.

To know that these routes had been of so great use was an excitement to the investigation of the country with the view of again making them available.

The march across Pishin from the Kojuk to Balozai gave me an opportunity of extending explorations and of maturing my early impressions of the value of Pishin as a military position. The examination of the country between Pishin and the Derajat added to my knowledge of the country, and the conclusions I have come to after a year of consideration are as follows.

The position at Quetta, taken up to support our relations with Kelat, was a most important starting point for the movement on Kandahar, but the Quetta Plain, being only the vestibule to the greater plain of Pishin, is quite incomplete and faulty by itself. Quetta commands the Bolan only, failing altogether to exert any influence on the passes of the Khoja Amran, or on those of the Kakur country in various directions back to the plains of India.

If we stand in imagination on the summit of the Khoja Amran we understand that we are really on the rampart which nature has given to the Pishin-Quetta plateau. Besides this there is no other great physical obstacle between the Bolan and Kandahar. In front of this rampart the Kadani Plain, glacis-like, is spread out, touching the desert on the left, open towards Kandahar to the front, and stretching up towards Maruf and Kelat-i-Ghilzai to the right. The Khoja Amran belongs to the Pishin position, and the possessor of it uses the routes in front of it or closes them at his pleasure.

If we turn to Balozai on the extreme north-east corner of the Pishin Plain, we find a position of the highest importance. As described in the earlier part of this lecture, and more fully in my paper published in the April number of the "Royal Geographical Society's Journal," Balozai is situated at a meeting of plains and valleys.

From here there are fair open vales descending gradually towards Quetta and Pishin, and close by we find the passes which lead to Zhob, Bori, and Tal. At Gwal, 13 miles south on the road to Quetta, lies the exit of the routes to Sibi and to Tal. Quetta fails entirely to command these passes, while Balozai does so perfectly.

The further requirements of a military position are not wanting. The continuous plains are suited for the action and watching of cavalry, and present routes in every direction for internal communication. The produce of the country in flocks and grain is considerable and will increase, and the neighbouring valleys on all sides will contribute to the market which a military occupation will give rise to. The climate has extremes of cold and heat, but the elevation tempers the heat, and the surrounding hills and high plateau afford sites for residence in a charming summer climate.

No country is without some imperfections. The *désagréments* of Pishin which were not experienced by us, as we were in constant movement, are those which all settlers must find in new countries.

Jacobabad could not have been a very pleasant residence when Jacob first pitched his tent there; yet now the Officer and soldier on watch at Chaman or Killa Kushdil Khan, in spite of the fierce heats which he knows reign in the valley of the Indus, sighs for this more mature settlement.

Object of the March.

In regard to the conduct of the operations, the following instructions were issued for guidance. The examination will embrace—

I. A general survey.
II. Careful consideration with reference to the construction of a military road and railway.
III. Examination of routes with reference to the movement of troops.
IV. Choice of a suitable site in a commanding position at a proper elevation, well supplied with food and water for a standing military post.

Position territorially to be subordinate to the above considerations.

Organization and Movements.

The organization of the expedition was arranged between General Stewart and Major Sandeman, under the orders of Government, to be carried out in the manner following:—Three columns were to move in succession from Pishin towards the Barkhan Plain. A column commanded by Colonel Prendergast, with Mr. Fryer, Political Officer, was to take supplies to Legari-Barkhan, and act as a point of appui. Major Sandeman was to act as Political Officer and march with the first column from Balozai.

The constitution of the columns is given in the Appendix.

Major F. S. Keen, 1st Punjab Infantry, commanded the first column; Colonel R. Sale Hill, 1st Goorkhas, the second; and Brigadier-General T. Nuthall the third column.

March from Balozai, 2nd Column on the 24th, 3rd Column on the 25th.

I reached Balozai on the 22nd, and completed organization according to the programme, filling up supplies for Europeans for 30 days and for natives for 7 days. The 2nd column, with which the head-quarters marched, left on the 24th, General Nuthall followed on the 25th. Major Keen's column, with Major Sandeman, were at this date several marches *en route*.

The movement was carried out without serious opposition until Major Keen had reached the Smallan Valley at Baghao on the 6th of March, where he was suddenly and vigorously attacked by the combined tribal force of Zhob, Bori, and the vicinity. Major Keen's dispositions were well made, and the troops behaved with great gallantry, in which all arms bore a part. The enemy was beaten off with considerable loss. Keen's loss was slight.

In the execution of the programme on reaching Biani, where the route to Tal-Chotiali leaves the Bori Valley, I preferred to direct the 2nd column through Bori, while General Nuthall followed Keen through Tal.

This disposition answered my purpose well. I found ample supplies in the Bori Valley and in the country of the Luni Pathans, and the position taken up checked all intention of further hostilities.

Time does not permit me here to trace in detail the movements of this interesting march through a perfectly unexplored country. The march was concluded without any misadventure, and the columns found a few days' repose in the peaceful Barkhan Plain, after incessant watchfulness and continued marching and exploring.

Legari-Barkhan reached on the 8th, 9th, and 11th of April.

The columns arrived in the following order:—The 2nd on the 8th, the 3rd on the 9th, and the 1st on the 11th of April.

From the Barkhan Plain, being in a country absolutely peaceful and friendly, the corps were moved singly by two routes. The 1st Goorkhas and 32nd Pioneers *viâ* the Chachar Pass, and the 15th Hussars, 70th Regiment, and 8th Bengal Cavalry *viâ* Fort Munro. The remainder of the troops were left at Barkhan with the view of establishing a camp at Vatakri.[1]

Movement from Legari-Barkhan, 11th to the 15th of April.

The movement to India from Legari-Barkhan commenced on the 11th, and by the 14th I was able to leave with the Head-quarters. Proceeding by easy marches over a delightful country we reached Fort Munro on the 17th, on the 19th we reached Zeradan. Here we found the heat excessive, 105° in our huts and over 90° at night. The troops suffered much, even marching at night. During the following marches, as we approached the Indus, the country was better clothed

[1] Afterwards broken up.

and cultivated and the heat diminished. The passage of the rivers, however, occasioned a good deal of exposure.

On the 27th we reached the Chenab, and I found here the 70th about to take the train, and I took the opportunity of inspecting the hospital. It was satisfactory to find that, notwithstanding the low condition of the men at starting, now at the close of a march of about 1,200 miles, there were few sick and no serious cases of illness.

The 15th Hussars had reached the rail some days before, and were already *en route* to their old quarters at Meerut. It is due to Colonel Swinley to say that this corps was brought down from the rude country offering so little fodder for horses in excellent condition. The horses were thin but wonderfully well cared for and fit. The men and Officers were in admirable condition.

It is impossible to notice here all corps, where all were so admirable. I must, however, put on record that Charles' Mountain Battery marched to the Helmund and back to the plains of Barkhan without giving a single mule a sore back.

I have now, so far as it is possible in the form of a lecture, traced the principal features of a march of upwards of seven months, from the Indus to the Helmund and back to India. To the Officers and soldiers who accompanied me, I owe a debt of gratitude for the success which attended our operations. It is impossible to speak too highly of the soldierlike virtues exhibited by all ranks throughout the long march. Always ready for action, and patient in hardship, they passed through all these countries without one single act of oppression or impropriety towards the inhabitants, and displayed an intelligence and a keenness in undertaking their several duties, which speaks well for the state of instruction in the corps which composed the forces, and of the Officers in general.

Concluding Remarks.

As the object of war is to secure peace, our aim in this respect will be furthered by our maintaining a hold on the military positions which are most suited to our purpose. It will be, therefore, interesting now to review the considerations which arise out of the study of the country described.

It has been shown how important a position Kandahar holds on the great trade route from Herat to India, how productive are the valleys which surround the city, and how the possessor might close the roads leading to the west and north-east. It should be kept in mind that Kandahar can also be defended against an enemy advancing from the east.

With Kandahar and Pishin in possession, our military position in South Afghanistan would be perfect, and if connected with India by rail, so many objects would be secured, that we might afford to resign other more intricate advanced posts in North Afghanistan. However, whether we hold or cede Kandahar, it is our duty to push on the railway, and Khorassan must be so under control that it may not become the scene of military activity.

Should Kandahar be resigned, the importance of our position in Pishin is much enhanced. In this case it will be incumbent on us to hold the Khoja Amran from some well-defined point on the north edge of the Toba plateau down to where the range terminates in the desert. And to command the range effectually, we must possess the glacis-like plain as far as the left bank of the Kadani stream.

Posts of observation would command in the Kadani plain all the routes leading into South Afghanistan, including the road from Kelat to Kandahar through Sherawak.

This frontier would also secure the entry to the valley leading towards Kelat-i-Ghilzai and Ghazni, and control the hill country lying to the north of Pishin.

All the territory east of the Kadani, *i.e.*, Pishin and Sherawak, would form part of the Empire.

The strength of the Pishin position lies in the great breadth of plain, in the peaceable character of the inhabitants, and in the security given by its left flank resting on the desert.

No military position, however, is perfect, and the defect in that of Pishin is caused by the continuous mountain mass to the north. The belt of mountains to the east is not so much an imperfection; it is narrow, and opens into valleys so arranged that there is no difficulty in moving about them in any desired direction.

As the Quetta position required the addition of Pishin, so the latter also requires something to make it secure, and if it is shown that the improvement can be carried out without incurring embarrassment, it is our plain duty to make the addition.

The communication from Sukkur by the Bolan, even though the rail is now carried up to Sibi, gives only one avenue of approach; it passes through a country exposed to excessive heat; it strikes the position obliquely at one end, and it is exposed in great part to tribes who, though now quiet, cannot always be trusted.

As regards the railway,[1] it will improve our communications vastly, but as from Sibi to Pishin, the line will pass through mountains inhabited by a people not yet settled down; it will not be safe to depend on it without our taking up a position on the north flank of the line.

To an important military position there should be several communications well covered by the position, and passing through a country quiet and friendly. If the people of the country to the rear of the position are likely to be mischievous, they must be held in check by a

[1] The railroad from Sukkur towards Pishin has been laid with the same gauge as that of the Indus Valley line, as far as Sibi, our work having been pushed on over the plain 136 miles in 131 days with extraordinary ability and energy. We are chiefly indebted to Sir Richard Temple, late Governor of Bombay, for originating and carrying into execution the commencement of this most valuable and interesting line of communication. The railway has now to wind up from Sibi through a succession of valleys and ridges, having to rise from about 800 feet up to 6,327 feet in the pass leading into Gwal. It may safely be said that this line will do more than anything else to pacify and civilize the wild countries bordering on the Empire, and it becomes all those interested to foster this, the greatest and most important outcome of our operations.

chain of military posts. Now I fancy no one will guarantee the permanent friendship of the Maris or of the Dumars, and it is quite possible that when the bulk of the army may have withdrawn from the plateau, the tribes will be mischievous, according to old habit.

The Maris raid, and are uneasy principally because they have few lands to cultivate, thus making excursions into the cultivated lands of their neighbours, has been naturally their great business in life.

Hence we found when we reached the Kitran country, that the Kitran chief and people were overjoyed to meet us, and hoped that I would place a military post to hold the Maris in check. The Kitrans, though able to hold their own, are exposed, and have broad cultivated lands open to attack.

In the countries of the Lunis and the Turins, and in Bori, the chiefs and people are obliged to be always on the alert, watching for the inroads of the Maris. Every village is a fortlet. Every field has its tower.

Now although the people of the Kakur country are independent, they are without enterprise, they have everything to lose and little to gain by a system of lawless insecurity. The valleys are broad and open, and favour agricultural pursuits, and it would be a charity to introduce the safety from plunder and the security of the roads which our occupation would originate.

The raids and disorders of the Maris and Bugtis have disturbed our border from all time, and their turbulence has given rise to much of the misunderstanding between the British Government and the Khan. Nominally his subjects, yet no Khan has ever been able to exercise complete control over them, and the provinces of the Khanate have suffered more from their inroads than any portion of British territory.

Now so long as the Mari country is open to the north and north-east, and free access is given into the lands of their neighbours, so long will this tribe carry on their old pursuits, and the consequences will be that chiefs and tribes who have been faithful and helpful to us will suffer.

The best way out of such troubles in the settlement of a difficult question, the most conducive to our consolidation at Quetta and Pishin, will be to bring the routes from the Derajat to Pishin gradually into use, and eventually to occupy the country without interfering with the independence of the people in the matter of their government more than is sufficient to secure peace and order. The process may be made a gradual one, accustoming the tribes of these valleys to intercourse with us, to be witnesses of the evidence of the British power, by conducting columns to and from South Afghanistan as we have already done.

It requires no stretch of imagination to foresee that another bulwark to the Empire would be formed, and a tract of tilled country would replace one of rough barren hills, which give cover to wild and dangerous neighbours.

APPENDIX I.

NOTE ON THE CITY OF BOST.

By Colonel HENRY YULE, C.B., R.E.

Bost or *Bist.*

It is not easy to find anything substantial regarding the history of this city. It is often mentioned indeed, but, so far as the present writer has been able to find, this mention almost always refers to its capture or to the devastation of its territory in war. For it lay on one of the great military tracks,—what may be called an obligatory route for an army,—the most direct from Persia and Herat to India, the most practicable even from those regions to Kabul. Alexander himself, in his advance to Bactria from Northern Khorasan, took the line of the Helmand. The city lay on the eastern frontier of Sijistán (originally Sigistán or Sagastán, now Seistan), in the *Garmsir* or low hot country. The older geographers generally count it as belonging to Sijistán, but sometimes it was reckoned as in Zabulistán or in Ar-Rukháj (*Arachosia*). The land of Bost is also often coupled with, sometimes included in, Zamín-Dávar, which was (and is I think) the name of the region immediately north of it, on the right bank of the Helmand.

There is not, I believe, much doubt that Bost is the subject of Pliny's reference to a city of the *Arachosii*, on the Erymanthus (otherwise *Etymandrus*, the Helmand).[1] The readings are various,—*Parabesten*, *per Abesten*, &c., but all suggest the name of Best, Bist, or Bost.

Isidore of Charax, in his "Parthian Stations," or Itinerary of the Parthian Empire, supposed to have been written in the first century of our era, mentions, as cities of the territory of *Anauōn* or *Anabōn* of Aria, introduced between *Aria* (Herat) and *Zarangiana* (the country long known as that of Zaranj, immediately adjoining the Lagoon of Seistán), "the very great city of *Phra*, the city of *Bis*, the "city *Gari*, and the city Niē." Mannert has identified the three first of these with *Farrá*, *Bost*, and *Girishk*. The first is hardly questionable, the two others very much so, as the location would be quite erroneous. For beyond *Zarangiana* the author places *Sacastane*, which must be that part of Sijistán which lies on the Lower Helmand, and then "*Arachosia*, or White India," in which is a city called Biyt (*Βιὺτ*). In this last, which is possibly also the Bigis of Ptolemy, we may more safely see a corrupt transcript of *Bist*.

We find a trace of Bost again in the ancient route-map of the Roman Empire, known as the Tables of Peutinger (from Conrad Peutinger, who possessed it), the original compilation of which is ascribed to the latter half of the third century. Here it appears as an important position on the road through *Gedrosia*, or Bilúchistán, to India, a road striking off at this point towards North-Western India (doubtless the road by Ghazni and Kabul). The place itself is termed on the map *Bestia*, with the ambiguous addition *deselutta*, which may be interpreted as a mediæval mistranscription of *destructa* or *desolata*, and will be the first of those commemorations of calamity to which we have alluded. The name, as *Bestigia*, also appears in the work of the (so-styled) "Ravenna Geographer" (*circa* 500), a work which contains a good deal of the same nomenclature as the Peutinger Tables.

Bost is mentioned in the early Mahommedan history as taken by Abdurrahmán, the son of Samra, in the time of Caliph 'Usmán (*circa* 655). It figures again in the wars (*circa* 700) that raged on this frontier with the Hindu King of Kabul in the days of Hajjáj, the great Viceroy of the Caliphate in the East, when another Abdurrahmán, son of Mahommed, was delegated to command in Sijistán, Bost, and Rukhaj.

[1] *Amnis Erymanthus præfluens Parabesten Arachosiorum* (lib. vi, cap. xxiii).

This commander, between whom and Hajjáj there was great personal hostility, had a singular history in which Bost figured, and a tragical end. In 865 we read of the conquest of Bost and Zabulistán by Ya'kúb-bin-Laith, the founder of the brief Saffari dynasty. In 976 the territory of Bost was taken possession of by the Amír Sabuktigín, and some detail, of no great interest on this subject, is given from Khondamír in "Elliot's History" (iv, p. 160). The great son of Sabuktigín, Mahmúd, erected cantonments at Bost, which were extended by his son Masa'úd (*ibid.*, ii, 61). The devastation of this unfortunate border-land in the 11th and 12th centuries, when first the Seljuks and then the Ghúris were attacking the waning dynasty of Mahmúd, is noticed in Elliot's extracts (ii, pp. 274, 380).

Istakhri, the geographer (*c.* 950), calls Bost the greatest city of Sijistán next to Zaranj. In the work translated by Sir W. Ouseley, under the name of "Oriental "Geography," which is chiefly founded on Ibn Haukal (about the same date), the following notice occurs:—The gate of Zaranj, looking towards Bost, seems to have been called *Dar-i-Bosti*, "the Bost Gate." Again we read: "The inhabitants of "Bost are polite and generous, resembling in dress and manners the people of Irák. "It is a city well supplied. . . . . They trade from this city with India" (pp. 203, 206).

This book also gives various itineraries from Bost, as does the geography of Edrisi (translated by Jaubert, vol. i), but the latter gives no particulars regarding the city. Mas'údi, speaking apparently from personal knowledge of the country, says:—"At "this day, in the year 332 (A.D. 943–4) the banks of the Hermand (compare Pliny's "*Erymanthus* above cited) are covered with villages, gardens, and pleasure grounds "belonging to the inhabitants of Sijistán; it is known as the 'River of Bost;' it is "ploughed by boats trafficking from that city to Sijistán, loaded with provisions and "all sorts of merchandize. Sijistán is *par excellence* the country of sands and winds. "It is famous for the industry with which the people utilize the winds in driving "mills, and in raising water to water gardens (on that sandy soil). Perhaps nowhere "in the world do the people turn their circumstances to such good account."[1]

The geographer, Yakút, rendered by Barbier de Meynard in the *Dict. Geogr. de la Perse* (pp. 100 *seqq.*), has several pages regarding Bost, but they are almost entirely occupied with an account of the theologians and other writers born there. Writing about 1220, he says:—"It is well watered and encompassed with gardens, "but it is almost in ruins, and as a man of wit has said" (no doubt the wit consists "in a pun upon *Bost* and *bostán*, a garden, though, in fact, that is probably but a "recurrence to the etymology of the name), "'tis now but the *garden* of the city "was."

Of later history I have found hardly a word. A note to Ferrier's "Caravan Journeys," probably due to Sir H. Rawlinson, says that the city was only reduced to ruins in the time of Timour (p. 379). The history of Sharíf-ud-dín, as rendered by Petis de la Croix,[2] mentions Timour's marching (1383) from Sijistán against Bost, but fails to say what happened there and then. Probably, however, this was the end of Bost as a city; though a fortress there, on an island in the Helmand, known in later centuries as Kala'-i-Bist (*Bist*, judging from the ancient traces of the name, was probably always the indigenous pronunciation), and guarding the frontier between Khorasan and Kandahar, is often mentioned in the 16th and 17th centuries, *e.g.*, in the wars of Sultan Hussain Mirza of Herat (*c.* 1498), in the recovery of the Afghan provinces by Humayun on his return from Persia (1542), and in the wars of Shah 'Abbás with the Delhi Emperor; it was taken by the former in 1648 and recaptured by the Mogul's troop in 1652–3. The fortress still exists.

[1] *Praires d'Or*, ii, 80.
[2] *Hist. de Timur-Bec* (tome i, p. 379).

APPENDIX II.

DETAIL OF THE CHOTIALI FIELD FORCE.

1st Column.

Major F. J. Keen, 1st Punjab Infantry.
Major G. U. Prior, D.A.Q.M.G.
Captain H. F. Showers, Transport Officer.
1 squadron 8th Bengal Cavalry.
1 „ 2nd Sind Horse.
2 guns Jacobabad Mountain Battery.
2 „ Peshawur „
1st Punjab Native Infantry.

2nd Column.

Colonel R. S. Hill, 1st Ghoorkas.
Major H. H. F. Gifford, 13th Hussars, Brigade Major.
15th Hussars.
32nd Pioneers.
1st Ghoorkas.
2 guns Peshawur Mountain Battery.

With this column the headquarters of the force marched as follows:—

Headquarter Staff.

Major-General Sir M. A. Biddulph, R.A., commanding.
Aide-de-Camp, Lieutenant S. F. Biddulph, 34th Regiment.
Colonel J. Browne, R. E., Political Officer.
Major G. B. Wolseley, 65th Foot, A.A.G.
Captain R. M. Stewart, R.A., A.Q.M.G.
Deputy Surgeon-General J. Hendley, A.M.D., P.M.O.
Captain W. G. Nicholson, R.E., Field Engineer.
Captain W. J. Heaviside, R.E. } Survey Department.
Captain T. H. Howick, R.E. }
Captain W. Luckhardt, Bombay Staff Corps, Principal Commissariat Officer.
Lieutenant W. G. Smith, 70th Foot, Signals.
Lieutenant J. J. Money-Simons, 24th Punjab Native Infantry, Transport.

3rd Column.

Brigadier-General T. Nuthall, Bombay Staff Corps.
Captain W. W. Haywood, 14th Foot, Brigade Major.
2 squadrons 8th Bengal Cavalry.
6 companies 70th Foot.
1 company Sappers.
1 wing 12th Bengal Native Infantry.

Column which proceeded from Dera-Ghazi-Khan to Leghari Barkhan.

Commanding, Colonel Prendergast.
Political Officer, Mr. H. Fryer, Deputy Commissioner, Dera-Ghazi-Khan.

Column.

2½ squadrons 15th Bengal Cavalry.
400 21st Madras Native Infantry.
200 30th „ „
100 Rawalpore Contingent.

This column left Dera-Ghazi-Khan on the 23rd February, and reached Vatakri on the 6th March. On the 30th, Colonel Prendergast marched, attended by Mr. Fryer, by the Hun Pass, to meet Major Keen and Major Sandeman. The

column was threatened, but was not attacked. The march of the 2nd Column on the 2nd to Annumbar effectually checked the intended hostile movement of the tribes.

Death Roll of Officers.

Lieutenant Willis, R.A., Kandahar, assassinated.
Captain Reynolds, 3rd Sind Horse, in action, Kishki Nakhud.
Colonel Fellowes, 32nd Pioneers, dysentery, Hun Pass.
Colonel Nicholetts (subsequently), 2nd Baluchis.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE, Bart., G.C.S.I., C.I.E.: If no other gentleman is desirous of addressing the meeting, I may as well mention that having been through a portion of the country that Major-General Biddulph has so well described, I can attest from personal observation the entire accuracy of his description. For instance, it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the situation of Kandahar, at the corner of that great desert. I have seen that desert, and have myself been caught in some of the dust storms which General Biddulph has mentioned. It is that desert which constitutes the great importance of the position of Kandahar. You will perceive by the map that if it were not for that desert, an enemy might take a short cut across from one corner to the other, but in consequence of it he must come round the corner of Kandahar, and that is one of the main reasons why the place must under all circumstances be held. I can also testify to the accuracy of what General Biddulph has said about the Tal-Chotiali Valley, the incursions of the Maris and our relations with the Terin and Kitran tribes; also the correctness of his description of the Khwaja-Amran range, and the importance of the Valley of Pishin, which is now the most advanced portion of the British Empire in that quarter, and which constitutes one of the most important accessions of British territory secured to us by the Treaty of Gandamak. I may further add my testimony to the importance of the line by the Bolan and Quetta, and to the correctness of Major-General Biddulph's description of the desert plain of Kachi, between the southern extremities of the Suliman range and Kelat. The extremely accurate description he gave of the Eastern Suliman range, and his remarks regarding the parallel Western Suliman range, are well worthy of your consideration, and have been brought out by General Biddulph much more clearly than by any other narrative I have yet heard. The extreme importance of the parallel Western Suliman range, upon geographical, political, and strategical considerations, will become more and more manifest the more that question is considered, and I think that General Biddulph has rendered an especial service on this occasion by bringing that point so prominently to your notice. With regard to the country beyond Kandahar, I am not able to give any personal testimony. I may, however, add, with regard to the neighbourhood of Kandahar, that the description which General Biddulph has given of its resources in agricultural and pastoral wealth is perfectly accurate. Those resources are extremely great. The cultivation round Kandahar is of the very best in all Asia. Rich as India is, there is hardly any portion so well cultivated as the country round that city, indeed, I hardly ever saw any land, in any country, which yields so many crops in the year, and in which the irrigation is so perfect. Between the low hills and the plain of Kandahar and the River Argandab the fruit gardens alluded to by Major-General Biddulph, are really a sight to behold. There is nothing in all Europe superior to the line of orchards and fruit gardens extending between those rugged trap hills and the rushing water of the Argandab.

Colonel MALCOLM GREEN, C.B.: I should like to ask General Biddulph whether the Mari tribes are of such a formidable nature, that they actually interfere with our communications in Kachi?

General BIDDULPH: I know that the Mari tribe is capable of putting 2,000 horse into the field, and marching perhaps a hundred miles to make an attack. I am not informed whether they have made an attack on the Kachi. I have not

stated that they have; but I am aware that they are enabled to do what I now point out, and they have made such raids over and over again.

Perhaps the audience would like to know how they manage these matters. When they wish to make a descent on a country, the tribe collect their wise men together, and they tell the warriors where the fat country lies, where the cattle and the corn are. When this has been done, they send forward a certain number of spies. These spies afterwards come back and say, It is all right, in such a country there is so much. Then the march is undertaken. They ride upon mares, which make no noise; they travel at night and lie by day. The spies are sent on again, and they give them the most accurate information. They are the most excellent outpost troops in the world. When they arrive close to the scene of action, a perfect watch is kept, and information by spies or by single messengers is secretly sent back. When everything is ready, a terrible rush of horsemen takes place, the villages are surrounded, the cattle are swept away, the women and children are hardly used. It is a very good chance for them, if they escape with their lives. The villagers have their little fortlets to retreat to; and if they reach them they can pull the ladder over and get in, and fire away from their towers, but it goes hard with them if villages are surprised and attacked.

Major-General Sir HENRY GREEN, K.C.S.I., C.B: I should like to ask whether the country of the Maris is so strong as to prevent the possibility of a small British force going in and destroying them, or bringing them to reason in some way?

General BIDDULPH: I should not wish to see them destroyed; they are not at all bad people. If left to themselves and not properly managed, they are likely to come and disturb my friends the Kakurs, and as the latter led me through the country very well, I should be sorry to see them injured.

Sir HENRY GREEN: How would you deal with the Maris?

General BIDDULPH: By placing a small force on their flank, just as if I met an uncomfortable character in the street; I should put some on on each side of him.

Sir HENRY GREEN: In my march through the country in 1859, I did not find much difficulty with them.

General BIDDULPH: As long as you are there in force, you can do very well; but directly you leave them to their own machinations, difficulties will arise. They require to be kept in order.

Sir HENRY GREEN: These men in the plain are not formidable?

General BIDDULPH: Oh, no.

Sir HENRY GREEN: Sir William Merewether, of the Scinde Horse, in 1847, met 700 Bugtis, and killed 620.

General BIDDULPH: Such might well happen in the plains, but when you get into the neighbourhood of the mountains, there would be trouble and loss taking place. I lost one great friend of mine through a neighbouring tribe, the Dumars, still troublesome. The way to be strong is to hold them in check, and to have your forts and your little posts until they gradually get accustomed to white faces, and then by degrees we might expect them to settle down.[1]

Mr. FRYER, Assistant-Commissioner Dera-Ghazi-Khan: I have known the Maris a good many years, and I have always found them perfectly easy to deal with. All that they require is that they should be kept in check, and not too much favoured.

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[1] "The country of the Maris is the strip of mountains lying between the Derajat "and the neighbourhood of the Bolan. On the north it touches the valleys of Tal- "Chotiali, and the country of the Lunis and the Plain Barkhan. As the Maris "are prevented from raiding on the Kachi or Derajat, they will carry out enter- "prises against their northern neighbours. My view is, that the Maris may be kept "in check by suitable points being held and by giving service, not to such an extent "as to spoil them, but so as to render them useful as police on communications. "It is of the highest importance to prevent the oppression of the Legaris, Kitrans, "and other tribes who have been and can still be useful to us, and it is high time "to gradually bring the Dumars, Maris, and other turbulent races to respect order "and tranquillity."—M. A. B.

In case of a force being sent against them, there would be no difficulty in mastering them at any time, provided you could catch them, but they have no settled home. They certainly have one large walled village, but they seldom reside there; they are generally out with their flocks. They have very few crops, so that in case of a force being sent against them, it would find nothing tangible, and the Maris would immediately retreat into the hills, and should the troops follow them, they would always find refuge amongst their neighbours. In the case of the Bugtis, when Sir Charles Napier went against them, the great majority of the tribe took refuge with the Kitrans, and they remained there until our forces were withdrawn, when they returned. The Maris would do the same. All the surrounding tribes are afraid of them, and would not be bold enough to refuse them hospitality. I am sure that on all occasions, when the Maris have been made to understand that it was their interest to help us, they have done so. As Major-General Biddulph has stated, they gave us guides when we were passing through their country, they assisted the convoys, and they did everything we asked them to do. As long as they show a disposition to be friendly and do what we want, there is no occasion to take any hostile measures against them.

Colonel DEANE: I should like to ask if Major-General Biddulph can give us any information with regard to the railway that is proposed from the Indus to Kandahar; whether it was commenced before he left the country; and, if so, whether he has any personal knowledge of its construction?

General BIDDULPH: The railway was commenced after I left India; the following notes on it may be interesting. You will see from the map that we have rail communication with Kotree, but at Sukkur, as the line takes the left or eastern bank, it is quite useless as a communication in a direction towards Kandahar from any point higher up the Indus. Hence it was wisely determined to make a line from Sukkur without waiting for further development of the railway system. For a long time it was considered that it would be a difficult operation to make a railway from Sukkur to Dadur, on account of the local floods and other circumstances; however, by the energy of the authorities, particularly of Sir Richard Temple, on the 1st of October the first plate was laid, and 136 miles were completed in 131 days, to Sibi. Now that is a marvellous feat, which should be thoroughly recognised. From Sibi, elevation 750 feet, the rail has to mount a ramp to a plateau of 5,300 or 5,400 feet. This, I must say, will be a very serious difficulty. However, it is hoped that by taking a semi-circular course, and leading along the sinuosities of the hills, they may be able to conduct the line to the Pishin plateau, entering it about Gwal, by easy gradients. This work will prove to be the one great outcome of the war, for there is nothing that will so tend to civilization and the introduction of a proper state of order as a good road. The course of the railway will be from Sibi up the Nari River, and the point of exit from the hills will be at the Suggurbund defile exactly opposite Gwal, and it would thus reach the open valley and the plain of Pishin, without crossing any obstructing limb or watercourse of any importance until the Khoja Amran is arrived at. It is probable that it would cross this range by the Gwaja Pass. The ascent will be easy, but the descent will be as steep as that of the Borh Ghaut, near Bombay, which I believe is 1 in 37. After the Khoja Amran is passed, there is no obstruction of any serious kind till the rivers Arghessan and Turnak. These rivers are serious difficulties, but I think any engineer might suggest to you how they might be overcome. I fancy it will be by trestle work of iron. There is, I repeat, actually no very serious obstacle but this Khoja Amran, after leaving the mountains on the east border of the Pishin Valley. The great difficulty and expense will lie between Sibi and Gwal. When the line reaches the plain of Kandahar—and I have no doubt it will be reached—there is no obstruction the whole way to Girishk, except at the Argandab River. I will only say, in conclusion, that I hope everyone in power will do his best to push on the railway, which will do more towards a settlement of Afghan difficulties than any other enterprise.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not venture to make any general remarks on this subject, as I have had no personal experience in India, but I will simply say that to-day one point has not been mentioned with regard to the value of Kandahar, namely, that it is not only a great commercial town and halting-place of caravans between

Herat and Persia and India, by the Bolan Pass, but that it is also on the main road to India by the Khyber, and is the point where the roads branch off to the two passes: this makes it doubly valuable—a value which would not be possessed by retaining Pishin only. I merely wish to point out this fact, as it has not been alluded to. We have now nothing further to do than to return our best thanks to Major-General Sir Michael Biddulph for the interesting lecture that he has given us.

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: I rise to second the motion. I regret that I was prevented from being earlier present on this occasion. I was compelled (as perhaps may be known to those present) to be in another place; but, finding there was time to come here, I was anxious to show by my presence—however late I might be—that I was desirous of attending this lecture, and that inability alone prevented my taking the chair. From what little I heard, I feel satisfied that the lecture was a very interesting and valuable one. As to the observations that have fallen from various gentlemen, as well as from Major-General Biddulph himself, on the political question, of course it would not be for me to say anything. I will only say that it is very essential to the interests of this Empire that these questions should be fully and fairly discussed and ventilated. The more that is known about them, the better it is for all parties concerned. Whilst we are anxious to do what is of great importance to ourselves, we are of course at the same time anxious to avoid doing anything which is unjust to others. In reference to these great subjects that are brought before us, we ought to hear all the *pros* and *cons* without favour or affection either towards ourselves or others. That is the only remark I will venture to make, because I feel that in my position it would be improper for me to express any opinion either one way or the other as to the advantage or disadvantage of holding this or that point on a great line which we have now occupied by the valour of our troops and by the excellence of our Generals. I should like to take this opportunity of saying that it is a matter of great congratulation to the country, that in all these operations that we have conducted, the Native Army of India has played a very conspicuous part, and that it has done so in a manner most creditable to itself and most valuable to the interests of the country; and I think that every opportunity should be taken of letting that be generally felt, as well at home as in India itself. I believe that the more we appreciate the value of those excellent troops, the more they will be devoted to our service, and the more they will add to the power and influence of our country. Allow me to repeat that I regret very much that I was not here at the earlier stage of these proceedings; but I cordially second the vote of thanks to Sir Michael Biddulph for his valuable and interesting lecture.

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Biddulph, M.A.S.
The march from the Indus to the Helmud and back.
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